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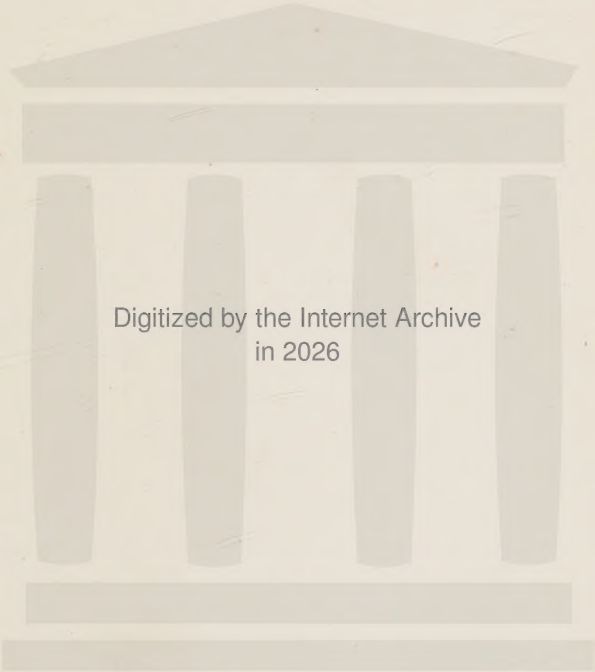

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OUR OLD COUNTRY TOWNS

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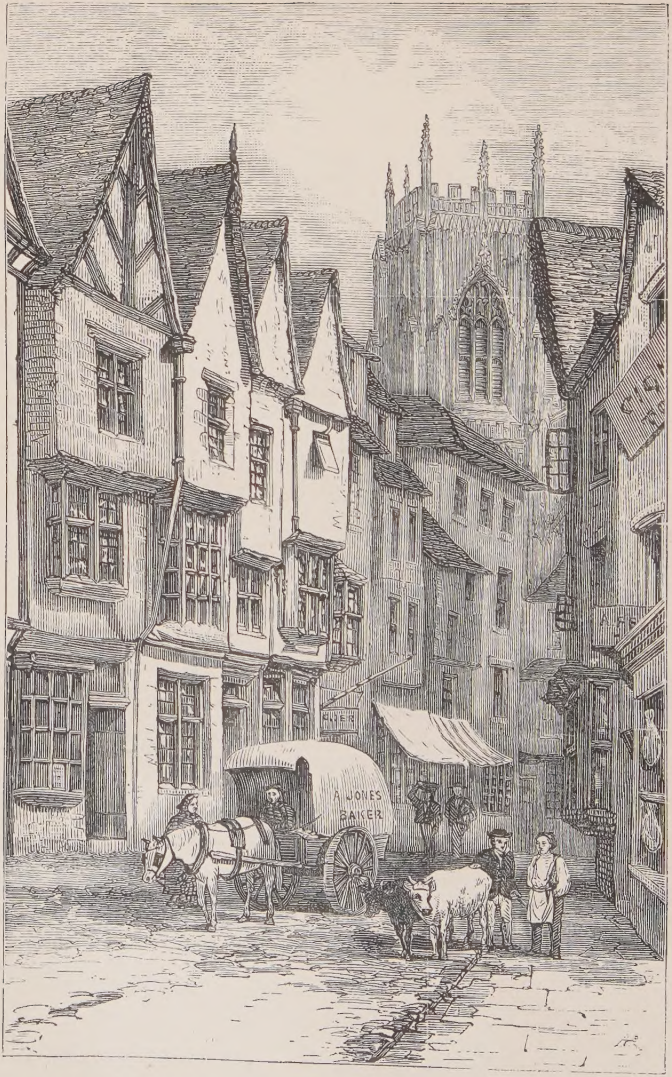

STONEGATE, YORK. *Frontispiece.*

OUR
OLD COUNTRY TOWNS

BY

ALFRED RIMMER

AUTHOR OF 'ANCIENT STREETS AND HOMESTEADS OF ENGLAND,' 'ABOUT ENGLAND WITH DICKENS,' ETC.

142.

WITH FIFTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

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PREFACE.

In calling attention to a subject that always interests a traveller, a few words of preface may be desirable. The chapters of this work are the result of a few excursions in the now unhappily neglected country parts of England—such parts as are not seen from a railway train. The appreciation for such subjects is not new, for I find articles in the "Gentlemen's Magazine" that date as far back as 1745, in which the writers point out interesting parts of England, for the guidance of "ingenious" travellers.

If the hand of the moderniser was stayed at even the eleventh hour, we should have still a country that can show fine old picturesque towns, and shady semi-rural retreats, inferior as it may be in such relics to what it was in the middle of the last century. In our rambles we come across old English towns that have carried their

names—and, as the provincialisms would show, their inhabitants—across the seas to distant colonies; and indeed Melbourne or Boston are better known in the New Worlds than in the Old one. This subject seems to have an especial interest now, when so much attention is turned to the old tenures of land and the old market centres of England. Sometimes also we can find ourselves face to face with the troubles of modern times, when we read of the Bedford Levels, and are reminded that the floods which are causing so much damage were known of old, though their causes were not only different, but almost the reverse of those that have flooded so many counties lately: and yet the old remedies of Cromwell's time and of James I. are just the remedies required now. Legends of monastic buildings may often be found equalling in humour the famous lays of Barham.

In some few instances the bill of fare of an inn has been given when it has been deserving of praise, and some little attempt has been made to vindicate the skill of an English landlord, though it is too often forgotten that he requires a thorough course of training. Athletes or gamekeepers may do very

well for a beer-house, but the responsibilities of a country inn are too great for them, and stale odours of tobacco and ale in no way shock their robust senses. But a house-servant, such as a valet or butler, often keeps an inn excellently; and if, as I have known in several instances, the landlord, following the law of natural selection, asks the cook to share his fortunes, the traveller may enter the porch with a tranquil mind.

This work is, of course, only fragmentary, and, indeed, its limits would not do justice to the country towns of any single county in England.

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OUR OLD COUNTRY TOWNS.

CHAPTER I.

FROM BELGRAVE TO MARKET DRAYTON.

Origin of Belgrave—Country Inns of England—Malpas and the Dawson family—Nantwich—Northwich and its salt mines—Whitchurch and Talbot's tomb—Market Drayton.

THE origin of the name Belgrave is perhaps not very generally known. There are those who have fancied it belonged to some foreign country, and was imported here with such exotics as Mecklenburg or Hanover; but it derives its name from an ancient hamlet in Cheshire.

About two miles from Chester is the village of Eccleston. It is large, and beautifully situated on the Dee; and it contains a considerable number of good residences, pleasantly nestling in trees and evergreens. Indeed, as Thackeray says of the "old town of Claver-

ing," "the place looks so cheery and comfortable, that many a traveller's heart must have yearned towards it, and he must have thought that it was in such a calm, friendly nook he would like to shelter at the end of life's struggle."

BELGRAVE, CHESHIRE.

The Dee is wooded down to the water's edge; and a rope ferry crosses over to Aldford Road. But if, instead of taking this, we take the other way, we shall arrive at the hamlet of Belgrave, which is by no means so picturesque or pleasant. It contains two farm-

houses, and the country round it is flat. Formerly this hamlet belonged to a family of the same name, but they have long been extinct, and even their name has not lingered in the district. It was spelt Belgreave, or Pleasant Grove. Quite unexpectedly, in the middle of this hamlet, we break upon the Belgrave entrance of Eaton Hall, from which a magnificent avenue, two miles in length and perfectly straight, leads up to the great building. If we add to this the city of Chester, and the family name of the lord of the soil, we shall see the origin of the names of five important squares of London; and a radius of two miles, or a little more, would include every locality that has been mentioned. Close to the farmstead engraved on the previous page is a moat in a small plantation that formerly surrounded the house of the Belgraves; but, like the family, every trace of the dwelling has perished. The last time the former appears by name in Cheshire history is when a great pageantry was performed in "Macklesfield Chapel," and Legh of Adlington surrendered his claims to certain lands he pretended to own under a settlement by Thomas de Belgrave and Joan his wife, to Sir Thomas Grosvenor: this was in the year 1412, and a record of the singular proceeding is preserved. The

title-deeds were read over in the church, and mass was celebrated. It was decided that Sir Thomas should "take an oath on the body of Christ, in the presence of twenty-four gentlemen, or as many as he wished, that he believed in the truth of the Charters. He received the sacrament, and as he knelt on the altar steps, Mr. Holt, counsel to Legh of Adlington, read them again, and a document was drawn up investing the lands in Sir Thomas Grosvenor. This was signed not by twenty-four, but fifty-eight of the principal knights and gentlemen in England;" so that, as has been remarked, a dry legal conveyance was turned into a romantic pageant, in conformity with the spirit of the age. These lands have remained in the family till the present day, and are now the property of the Duke of Westminster, the lineal descendant of Sir Thomas Grosvenor. If an apology is necessary for this digression, it must be that on the road from Chester to the places to be described we pass by the very thresholds of Belgravia, and the wayside history is often the most interesting. It will be necessary to walk or ride through these parts, as there is not a railway. Indeed, railroads are not very pleasant, nor do they afford much opportunity for acquainting ourselves with the country we are passing through. With

a few exceptions—such, for example, as the part of the Great Western line which leaves Chester, or of the Midland that runs through Derby the view from the carriage window is not inviting. The dreary station with its enclosures usually conceals the country town at which the train is stopping. The town may indeed be full of picturesque beauty, perhaps of historic interest, but the traveller knows of it only by a formal station, platforms, and a goods-shed. Before railways were constructed, and when coaches were the conveyances, Englishmen knew much more of their country than they now do. Travelling carriages were quite common among the wealthy, and they spent a holiday in them, in seeing the beauties of their own land. Many a thousand pounds that is spent abroad might just as easily remain at home, and show the tourist old towns and cities that would have as great an interest for him, in all probability, as those he could see abroad, and also show him landscapes as beautiful as any the sun ever shone upon. Yet I was once asked by a gentleman in the South of England, who had travelled all over the world to see new sights, and had even hired escorts to take him to the deserted cities of Asia and America, if York-Minster was really worth going 300 miles to see.

Some persons say that the hotel accommodation in England is poor except at railway centres; but the answer to this is complete. Englishmen can keep hotels as well as men of any other nation; but if the coffee-rooms of their hostelries are deserted, they cease to take any particular pains with them. Commercial travellers could tell a different tale. Let any one who may be a guest at the principal inn of a small country town contrive to get a look at the commercial travellers' room, and he will see at a glance how sumptuously they fare there every day, and will perhaps make invidious comparisons between their luxury and his own lot. But the landlord is quite right—he knows that, as surely as the months come round, the well-known visitors will reappear; and he welcomes them accordingly. Indeed, an ingenious friend proposed to have a small sample case made, and to sail under false colours to better quarters.

Some reviewers of my "Streets and Homesteads" have kindly pointed out where an out-of-the-way country town possesses houses or remains of interest, or an ancient inn that I had not known of. And this is valuable indeed, for they will remember how easily such things are passed by, as it is difficult to explain our wants in this respect to stationmasters or land-

lords; and country-guides, if ever so accurate, are not written with a view to advance the progress of art, or amateur archæology.

I feel almost tempted to quote again a few words I used at an archæological society, and say that those who wander away for their holiday to Belgium, or the Rhine, or Switzerland, often think but little of the delights they leave behind. "Within a few miles of where these lines are written are the Cheshire hills, neglected indeed by artists and tourists, but almost unsurpassed in beauty. From one of these hills at Broxton no fewer than ten counties can be seen, and the landscapes on every side are as pleasing as they are broad and rich. The estuary of the Mersey is plainly visible on the north, and to the west are the bends of the Dee, showing themselves at intervals in thin streaks through the dense foliage, like loops of silver thread on thick pile velvet. Chester is easily seen, as also Nantwich and Malpas, and Whitchurch, and many church towers besides that have stood the wear and tear of centuries. There are parks and black and white farm-houses scattered over the vast landscape; and in one direction, where a long stretch of road is visible, a coach (for there are a few stage-coaches left) looks only like a speck, and hardly seems to make

any progress at all. Again and again the plains we overlook have figured in the civil wars, and we are reminded of monarchs who 'waded through slaughter to a throne,' while at the same time the woods of Gresford and the tower of Wem are plainly visible—the one gave birth, and the other a title, to the judge who shut the gates of mercy on mankind."

Bicycles have had their use in inducing young men to travel along their own lanes. Not that I can speak as an adept, lacking indeed the *robur et æs triplex*, and one never learns the initiatory stages from observation—indeed, to most, these conveyances have a sort of cometary existence, and are not, as a rule, mounted or dismounted in public; but the gentleman who may have given £10 or £15 for a bicycle will be apt to stay at home for his holiday, and see some of the sights of his native country. These modes of locomotion are probably in their infancy, and it would be quite practicable to have an increased number of double wheels, on axles, that could be extended or diminished according to the size of the party, while light baskets would carry all that was required. The first locomotives would attract much interest, doubtless; but the first bicycle did the same, though now one passes by unheeded.

If from the beautiful scene spoken of on the Cheshire

hills we turn our journey southward, we soon arrive at the fine old country town of Malpas, pronounced in the neighbourhood Mawpas. It is not the seat of any industry, but merely an agricultural centre, and five or six trains daily stop at its station. There is of course the well-known history of a great castle there, and many names of fields and crofts, and some streets, are derived from its component parts; for it must be remembered that we are near the Welsh Marches, where for many centuries Judah vexed Ephraim, and Ephraim Judah.

Parts of the castle walls yet remain, and it is supposed that, for protection, the grand old church was once enclosed in them. The burial-places of the Egertons and the Cholmondeleys are here, and the sleepy old town was once the scene of knightly splendour; nor was this splendour confined to the castle, for Malpas Old Hall, which was unhappily burnt down last century, was the seat of the Brereton family, whose hospitalities quite equalled those of their neighbours.

It would be most unjust to ask the traveller whom we are endeavouring to persuade to see his own country, to search parish records, though these often contain gems of the purest ray; no—let compilers of guides

do that; there will not be a lack of volunteers if their labours are wanted; and as an instance of what there may be in some neglected spot, let us turn to the story of Richard Dawson, who lies in the churchyard; for all the knightly families whose names are now household words in Cheshire, would hardly find in all their records so great an instance of heroism. We might search for his equal the history of Greece or Rome, and search perhaps in vain. His history is alluded to by both Ormerod and Lysons, and there is no doubt of its accuracy. One of the plagues that were such terrors to our forefathers visited these parts in 1625, and committed frightful havoc. In Malpas there was hardly a house in which there was not more than one dead; and among others the Dawsons, who were in humble circumstances, came in for fully their own share of the common calamity. Thomas Dawson died August 15, and his daughter Anne, August 20, and later on in the same day his wife Anne. His brother Richard, who was a very powerful man, had seen them die, and felt symptoms at the time that the deadly malady had laid its hands on him. He told his brother's son that they who were at home would not have strength enough to bury him, and their neighbours were as badly off themselves; so he used what energy

was left to dig his own grave, and putting some bundles of hay in it, he covered these with a blanket and lay down to die. It was summer weather, and he can hardly have suffered on that score, for he lived till August 24, or four days after the death of his brother's wife, whose son attended him as well as he could in his grave. But the hand of death was on him too, and he only survived his uncle four days longer. As for any parallel we can find in the heroes of Greece or Rome, Pericles broke down, and we like him all the better for it, when he placed the wreath on his last daughter whom the plague had smitten. Curtius rode into the chasm with all Rome admiring, and must, as has been truly said, have not under-estimated himself when he considered he was the most valuable thing Rome possessed; but here, without the applause of senates, one to whose memory a storied urn would be little more than a mockery, quietly lay down to die in a grave of his own making, for he said that, as he was a heavy strong man, he was heavier than his "nefew and another wench" would be able to bury.

There is one peculiarity in Malpas church—it has two rectors, each with an imposing rectory-house and each possessing large revenues.

The road to Malpas from the station is about a

mile and a half long, and lies through a beautiful country ; a rich plain is spread out on our left hand, that embraces the southern part of Cheshire, and extends far away in Shropshire, and is bounded in the blue distance by the Haughmond Hills, where the battle of Shrewsbury was fought, and Falstaff slew the hot Percy. To return, however, to the double rectory. There is a tradition which is most rigidly held in the old town, that on one occasion King James who occupied much of his time in the north, spent an evening at Malpas, and met, as was to have been expected, the rector and his curate, at the old Lion hotel, enjoying a bottle of sack. He was incognito, and joined the company ; and when the time came for reckoning, the curate proposed that they should clear off the stranger's score, but the rector objected, saying that it was not Malpas fashion. The tradition goes on to say that the king, when he arrived in London, wrote out a patent dividing the rectory into two, and giving the curate his choice of the moiety ; and the chair in which he sat, a very curious ash one, is shown as the seat the monarch used. But, unhappily for the legend, there is in the muniment-room at Cholmondeley Castle a deed conveying the site of a Chantry chapel to the Cholmondeley family, signed by both

rectors, in the fourteenth century. But for all this, the tradition is an article of faith with the inhabitants.

Malpas church, it is pleasing to say, has never been restored, and the black oak pews have the devices of the families they belonged to, in the majority of cases, painted on the doors. One almost dreads entering an ancient church now, for fear of seeing the old oak removed, and open pitch-pine benches in its place.

Malpas is not at all unlike an old French town, or perhaps it more closely resembles one of the quaint old country towns we meet with if we leave the Rhine for a stroll from the river.

There is an old market-place with the great row of octagonal steps for a cross, which has been replaced recently—these were the steps where monks from Combermere or Chester used to address the people at intervals during the market, and collect tolls—but now the markets, like the monks, are matters of history. In the middle of the town is the "Crown," an old-fashioned inn of imposing appearance; indeed, it would not discredit a street in London with its Dutch bricks, and stone quoins, and rows of windows; but now its rooms are tenantless, excepting one or two that have sunk into a public-house—all the remains of its former glory. Opposite this is the "Lion," which contains the singular

chair alluded to, and is a pleasant oak-panelled old house, such as one reads of in Dickens's coaching scenes.

It is difficult at times to avoid an appearance of guide-book writing in such a paper as this (though, indeed, I can read any guide-book to any part of England with interest, even though the place may be strange), but to pass over Malpas without noticing its church would be leaving Hamlet out of the play indeed. There is a peculiarly venerable look about the noble edifice, which is almost of cathedral dimensions. No restorer has scraped away the mould of ages, and it reminds one of the churches of twenty or thirty years ago, before it became the fashion to holy-stone an ancient front. The architecture appears to be of about the time of Henry VII., and the interior of the church, which is characteristic of the time, is so light that it seems almost like a vast birdcage. Two noble chapels of the Cholmondeleys and Egertons, enclosed in open oak tracery, stop the end of each aisle, and these have a floor-space of five hundred feet each, while, of course, effigies of old barons sleeping in cold dull marble adorn them. Bishop Heber's father was the rector of Malpas, and here he was born ; and it is mentioned as a curious trait of the pomp of an old

MALPAS, CHESHIRE.

dignitary that he used to drive in a coach-and-four from his own house to the church, though the road lay entirely through the rectory grounds, and is not more than a three-minutes' walk in length.

A few miles to the north-east of Malpas is Nantwich with its grand old parish church—one of the finest, indeed, in England. The inhabitants fought on the Parliamentary side with great desperation during the civil war, and temporary earthworks were constructed to encircle the old town. The street shown on next page may be taken as a fair example of the roadway we might have expected to find in the Tudor period. In some parts a man with a hand-cart would experience a little difficulty in threading the narrow lane; but the houses are yet in a very substantial condition.

Another old Cheshire town is Northwich, on the Weaver. It is the centre of the great salt region of this part of England, and it sends the product of its mines to all quarters of the globe. This town is well worthy of a visit, if only to see the curious way in which the houses incline towards each other and from each other in wrong directions, while props are used to keep them as nearly upright as circumstances will permit; but unhappily there is an insidious foe at work, and the whole town is sinking.

Along the valley of the Weaver, rock salt is de-

ANCIENT STREET, NANTWICH, CHESHIRE.

posited at vast depths, and as this is quarried out, room is made for water to percolate and form brine,

which is pumped out and manufactured for commerce; so that "rank corruption, mining all within, infects unseen," and consumes but too surely the foundations of Northwich. The coffee-room of the "Crown" is rather dim, and I have known a gentleman who was a stranger to the place, and one whose way of life was unexceptionable, rise up after his lunch to go to the fireplace, and measure his whole length upon the floor —giving him, as he afterwards said, an impression that the moderate quantity of wine he had consumed had been tampered with. Floors are propped up and wedged up from cellars, and lobbies are lowered to suit the levels, but it is only a question of time, and Northwich, in all human likelihood, will at last be buried in a salt-mine.[1] Owners of property are now, it is true, alive to their impending danger, and have requested the Home Secretary to grant them a royal commission to investigate their grievances, before the fate of Northwich resembles in some degree that of the Cities of the Plain we read of in Scripture history. But the Home Secretary does not see his way to grant their prayer; and it is said that some owners of tenements are already meditating a flight before Northwich

[1] Since writing the above, some alarming subsidences have occurred in the streets of Northwich, indicating a not distant calamity.

shall have dissolved like some insubstantial pageant, and left but a wreck behind. Of course the celebrated prophet Nixon, who figured nearly five centuries ago, has had his say in the matter, and predicted this among other calamities that are to befall his native county. Local prophets are like the son of Imlah, they "never prophesy good, but always evil," though it may be true, as he predicted, that the day would come when Northwich would be a lake on the Weaver river.

The beautiful meres that we find in Cheshire and the northern part of Shropshire are held by many to have been formed by a subsidence, though opinions differ widely as to their appearance. One thing is certain, that over the surface of this salt region unlooked-for collapses of land have from time to time taken place, and I have seen a farm-house suddenly sunk, and only the chimneys left on a level with the highway. And there are many pools that have certainly had such an origin, though whether or not it can be claimed for small lakes, as they might be called, like Combermere or Ellesmere, is to some extent conjectural. At the farther margin of the salt district is the old-fashioned town of Whitchurch; there is an ancient market-place with many fine old houses, but the chief interest centres in the church, which is a rectory of great value; and the

rectory park, studded with elm and shade trees, spreads away in ample acreage from the churchyard walls. The church has indeed been sadly altered, and almost rebuilt; but the older part contains the ashes of the great Talbot, who has been immortalised by Shakespeare. In the First Part of Henry VI., Talbot has sent for his son to tutor him in the "stratagems of war," that he might sustain the military renown of the Talbot family, but finds that a terrible and "unavoided danger" has overtaken the expedition, and urges his son to fly. The latter, however, utterly refuses, and says he would never be thought his son—

> He is not Talbot's blood
> That basely fled when noble Talbot stood.

And when the battle interrupted their colloquy, and young Talbot had fairly won his spurs, his father in a long argument again urges his flight; but young Talbot tells him to

> Talk no more of flight, it is no boot;

to which the father replies—

> Then follow thou thy desperate sire of Crete,
> Thou Icarus: thy life to me is sweet.

So they again join the conflict, and are slain; and in

Act iv. of the play Sir John Lucy goes to the Dauphin's tent to ask for Talbot's body, and herein the interest of the monument at Whitchurch commences. Lucy asks for the "Great Earl of Washford, Waterford, and Valence, Lord Talbot of Goodrig and Urchinfield, Lord Strange of Blackmere, Lord Verdun of Alton, Lord Cromwell of Wingfield, Lord Furnival of Sheffield, the thrice victorious Lord of Falconbridge, Knight of the noble order of St. George, worthy St. Michael and the Golden Fleece," etc. etc., till Pucelle says—

> Here is a silly stately style indeed!
> The Turk, that two and fifty kingdoms hath,
> Writes not so tedious a style as this.
> Him that thou magnifiest—fly-blown lies here;

and the Dauphin contemptuously adds, "Go, take their bodies hence," in rejoinder to Joan of Arc, "For God's sake let him have them, to keep them—they would but putrefy the air." Now, Talbot was buried in a tomb of the chancel of Whitchurch, and in some recent repairs his ashes came to light. One always deeply respects the sentiment of his great chronicler in Stratford church—

> Good friend, for Jesu's sake forbear
> To dig the dust enclosed here!

but as in the ordinary course of events the remains were

exposed, it is not uninteresting to know that they quite correspond with what might have been expected, and they are re-interred in the same tomb. Talbot was a man slightly, but only slightly, above the middle height, evidently of great symmetry, and it was clear that he possessed the higher orders of intelligence. It is evident also that he was wounded many times before he fell, and the scene in Henry VI. is probably not far removed from the truth. Indeed, when Shakespeare wrote, or perhaps from when he could remember to have heard the French war spoken of, not more than a quarter of a century would have elapsed between his informant discussing the battle with a combatant, and relating his tale to Shakespeare.

Wem lies a few miles to the south of Whitchurch, and has a weird interest as being the place from which Judge Jeffreys took his title. It is a beautiful old town, with a broad street, from which others diverge. The judge was born at Acton Park, not very far distant. He had spent some of his great wealth in acquiring land in the neighbourhood, and also owned the Manor of Wem. There is, or there was a few years since, a portrait of him at South Kensington, and, strange as it may seem, he was a genial pleasant-looking man, without any trace of the cruelty and wickedness in his

countenance that will make him a byword for ever in

ENTRANCE INTO MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE.

history. Indeed, judging from some records of trials that are preserved *verbatim* in the library of Trinity

MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE.

College, Cambridge, he could be merry in trying a civil case, and carry an audience with him.

Almost equally distant from Whitchurch is Market Drayton, a goodly specimen of an old-fashioned town. The streets are broad, and the few inns are unexceptionable. Black and white houses with carved fronts are continually met with, and the situation of the quaint old place can be judged by the drawing—which is taken from the Shrewsbury Road.

There is a fine Norman doorway to the church, but unhappily the tracery of the windows has been removed. Near Market Drayton was fought one of the battles of the Roses, one of the singular conflicts in which men took each other's lives for a cause they did not understand, nor indeed their so-called betters—smiting and being smitten for some claimant they never saw, and who, if their remains had been carried past him to burial, would have called the sorrowing relatives "untaught knaves, unmannerly, to bring a slovenly unhandsome corse betwixt the wind and his nobility." In Henry VI.'s time, Nevil, the Earl of Salisbury, with something like 5000 Yorkists, met Lord Audley with nearly double the number of Lancastrian followers, who were in a great measure recruited from the parts of Cheshire we have been considering. Lord Audley with

most of his followers was slain, and Salisbury marched to the beautiful town of Ludlow, where he met Richard, Duke of York, and took measures to secure the crown for his liege.

CHAPTER II.

THROUGH DERBYSHIRE.

Midland line through Derbyshire—Watling Street, Castleton—The Peak —Bakewell — Wirksworth — Belper— Derby — Ashby-de-la-Zouch — Brick architecture—Destruction of castles—Church at Ashby, and church-restoration—Huntingdon Chapel, and Countess of Huntingdon —Gopsall Hall—Cheshire Cat.

AMONG the most beautiful and interesting railway journeys in England must be ranked those along the northern sections of the Midland line. One branch leads straight through Cheshire from Chester to Manchester. It traverses the length of Delamere Forest, formerly one of the principal Royal hunting demesnes in the kingdom, and one where it is said that game could be found even if scarce in other parts. The ancient trees have disappeared, and their site is occupied by a more modern growth. Indeed, great oaks or elms are only to be looked for now in private parks, or occasionally by the roadside, near some ancient village.

In old times, however, Cheshire was almost covered with dense forest growth; and when the beautiful old Abbey at Birkenhead was tenanted by monks, it is said that Wirral, or that peninsula of Cheshire that lies between the Mersey and the Dee, was one sombre wood. Now there is hardly a tree to be seen between the Mersey and Hilbree Island on the Dee, though an old distich says—

> "From Birkenhead to Hilberee,
> A squirrel can go from tree to tree."

The extinct, or nearly extinct, wild animals, such as the badger and wild-cat, lingered here longer than in other parts, and some years since a veritable specimen of the latter was shot on Peckforton Moss by a friend of the writer's. It was much heavier than any domestic cat, and some naturalists say that the wild-cat was of a different species. The face and mouth were very wide, and so ferocious did they look when disturbed, that it was easy to see why to "grin like a Cheshire cat" is yet a common proverb in the north of England.

Watling Street marches in parts along by the railway, and is yet the principal road between many old country towns. It dies off in a marsh a few miles from Chester, and though it is but little known even to the

inhabitants of that ancient city, there are a series of Roman arches in perfect preservation there. The stones might have been shaped and set in Queen Anne's time, and well preserved even then. This journey through the middle of Cheshire was opened up in 1875, and is extremely interesting; but it is only after passing Marple and taking a southerly course that the beauty of the scenery begins to develop. On the right are the broad fertile plains of Cheshire, with the parks of Poynton and Lyme spread out in many acres, and rising in the middle of them is the old town of Macclesfield, with its church founded by Queen Eleanor, whose memorial crosses have been the models for the best of our modern ones, and on which architects, to do them justice, have never attempted to improve. It was in this town that the commissioners reported, more than a quarter of a century ago, that 96 per cent of the children employed in the factories could read. On the left-hand side of the road is a long dark row of hills, some of which are well covered with heather, and abound with very fine grouse. These hills shut out the Peak with all its romantic scenery; and an idea can be formed of the wildness of the country from the fact that between Sheffield, Barnsley, and Buxton—quite, as we may say, in the most enterprising part of England—there is a

district of more than four hundred miles in extent that has never been startled by a railway whistle. Castleton lies in the heart of this region, and its castle was formerly considered to be quite impregnable. It takes the name of Peveril from its founder, who was a son of William the Conqueror, and it figures conspicuously in Scott's novel, to which it gave the title. The road from here to Buxton is singularly wild, and is called Windgate from the rush of air that is always to be met with there. Dark rugged precipices rise on each side, and all of a sudden in one part a bend opens out the beautiful vale of Castleton. Castleton is the only place that can be called a country town in all this great district; Eyam and Derwent are not more than villages. The wonderful stalactite caverns that abound here, and are supposed to cover many square miles, do not meet the attention they deserve; it is a great pity they are not on the Rhine, or in the middle of France, instead of being only a walking distance from Chapel-le-Frith station on the Midland railway. The castle here rises from a great rock that overhangs the Derwent, and, as Scott says, the "feudal Baron chose his nest upon the same principles on which an eagle selects her eyry, and built it in such a fashion as if he had intended it, as an Irishman said of the Martello towers, for the sole pur-

pose of puzzling posterity." As we proceed along the line, the road becomes much more beautiful; and Bakewell, which lies below us on the right hand, is a perfect model of an old country town with its great church spire and clustering roofs and elm-trees. It once belonged to Peveril, but now is the property of the Duke of Rutland. Chatsworth Park extends away on the left hand, and the railway soon after intersects the ancient liberties of Haddon. Of course Haddon Hall needs no mention here; it is certainly the most perfect specimen of an ancient baronial mansion in England, and even the modern parts are of the early period of Elizabeth's reign. The park is under cultivation now, but it still retains its stately appearance, and near the mansion is still left a magnificent sweep of old forest-trees. We may note in passing, though we are rather lingering on our road, that Haddon belonged at one time to the Vernons, and the last male heir of the line was called the "King of the Peak" owing to the splendour of his hospitalities. The household servants numbered generally much more than a hundred. This is classic ground for anglers. Ashbourne on the Dove is not far distant, and here Cotton entertained his friend Isaak Walton at his country seat, and wrote the second part of "The Angler." He was a charming writer, and

nearly as prosy as his friend Walton, but he wanted the freshness and almost grim simplicity that will make the name of Walton immortal and the delight of every future age.

Between Ashbourne and Matlock is a singular old country town, Wirksworth, that is quite in the wilds, though now a branch of the same railway reaches it. It is a place of great antiquity, and there are remains in some of the shops and houses of handsomely panelled rooms and enriched ceilings. In one small inn is a chimneypiece of great size and elaborate workmanship, for which it is said large sums of money have been offered. And while on this subject I may remark upon the wantonness and selfishness that would remove some old relic from the place into which it is built, and take it away to adorn a private property. It at once loses its interest, and the walls from which it has been plundered lose their interest too. Within a very short distance of where this is written is an old mansion-house now cut up into smaller tenements, and there are one or two noble old fireplaces, and two ceilings of great grandeur. One of these, which covers a very large farmers' club-room, was actually sold for removal to a new house that was being built in a watering-place of mushroom growth. Here the purchaser proposed to

build a room to fit it in his new red-brick residence; and whether to admire the purchaser or the seller more I am at a loss to decide; but the constructor of the ceiling deserves no measured praise, for the pendants and bosses were hung on wires with such skill and care, that when the first section was cut out it was found that it must crumble if its removal were attempted, and now it remains where it should be. I cannot say if the money was paid in advance, and invested in Turkish bonds by the spirited vendor, but we may in charity be permitted to hope so.

The country as we enter the southern division of Derbyshire is perfectly charming. Belper, which contains the great mills of the Strutt family, and gives the title to the head of the firm, is passed, and on the right hand are the dense woods of Kedleston, the seat of Lord Scarsdale, and perhaps not inferior in size to Blenheim, which was built at about the same period. Derby is soon reached, and though its name is the centre of so many associations in English history, the town itself has a very modernised appearance. All Saints is an old church, and contains some monuments of the Cavendish family; and there is a somewhat curious chapel on a pier of the bridge that spans over the Derwent. It has been the market for great indus-

tries so long that it has ceased to be an ancient town. Chelluston and the charming old town of Melbourne lie on the way to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, one of the old places that are so rarely visited. Yet it is full of interest, and the country round it is delightful. We may at first be inclined to wonder at the singular affixes to the name of the town, so unlike any other in England ; but their history is that there was an ancient family, represented at one time by Conan de Toit, who were sovereign Princes of Brittany, and one of them—the celebrated Earl Alan, as he was called—married a daughter of William the Conqueror, and commanded the reserve at the battle of Hastings. It would be too much to expect a very clear or authentic history of the various ramifications of this family, but many of the branches attained to greatness, and one of them, a Count of Brittany, married, at the time when Fair Rosamond was spending her summers at Woodstock, an heiress of Ashby, and, as he was to found an English house, he took the name of Zouch (Souche), which signifies the stump of a tree.

In the year 1461 Ashby, with many other estates, was granted to the excellent and amiable Hastings, whose shocking end has been immortalised in Richard III. The splendour of his living may be inferred from the circumstance that he had at Ashby Castle two lords,

nine knights, fifty-eight esquires, and twenty gentlemen retained by indenture—and that not an apprentice's indenture, that ends certainly in seven years, but for life—to take his part against all persons whatever, the King only and his rights excepted. Shakespeare lived so near the times, and the truth of most of his historical allusions has been so proved by recent knowledge, and in some notable instances by the results of the Royal Commission for exhuming ancient manuscripts, that we may take the fifth scene of the third act in Richard III. as a true picture; yet again and again we read it to comprehend what Richard's motive was in his sudden and barbarous execution. Hastings was a vast territorial lord, he had emparked five square miles of land round Ashby, and larger possessions hard by; he spoke with the best wishes of Gloster's claim to the crown, "In the Duke's behalf I'll give my voice—which I presume he'll take in gentle part;" and he doubtless wished to live in quiet on his broad acres. But Richard was himself the result—the creature, indeed—of the Wars of the Roses. For thirty years England had been torn by the senseless struggles. In less than a quarter of a century it is estimated that nearly half the gentry and fully 100,000 working men lost their lives—this, too, out of a population not so large as that of some English

REMAINS OF STATE ROOM.

counties. Nor did it matter at what time of the year these contests were waged; whether at seed-time or harvest, at the call of the feudal lord, the unwilling husbandman had to leave his crops and his cattle to their fate, and with the best weapons he could command he had to join the muster, beating back, in hardly figurative language, his ploughshares and pruning-hooks into swords and spears.

WARDER'S TOWER, CASTLE, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

Relatives were of course often by circumstances ranged against each other, and hence the mixture which we so often find of hesitation and blind indiscriminate fury. Richard, according to Shakespeare, hardly seems to have had any designs upon the life of Hastings till slaughterous thoughts overtook him; and the indecision and frenzy he showed at Bosworth Field, and which so characterise the period, were a fitting termination to the shocking strifes of the Roses. They do not exceed in sense or utility a feud in Ireland called the "Three-year-old," and "Four-year-old," where, for nearly a century, faction and bloodshed disturbed the country, the whole question being that of the age of a heifer. The remains of the castle here shown may convey some idea of its former splendour. The chimneypiece, which would be an excellent model for architects, hangs up at almost a dizzy height on the walls; indeed, unless the beholder has strong eyes, it would require an opera-glass to see its details. The octangular watch-tower is a beautiful example of brickwork: I was reminded, on seeing it for the first time, of some remarks I had formerly made about the excellence of brick as a building material, and also its picturesqueness when properly handled; but, alas! the heads or hands to manipulate it have taken another turn, and we

must begin again. The fragment here shown is octangular, and the chimney-stack corbelled out on one of the faces increases the light and shadow. Red brick, even the small ones of which the lodge is built, is glaring in itself, and very apt to run away with its employers; indeed, unless sufficient shade and breadth is secured, it is better left alone. Lincoln's Inn, Hurstmonceux Castle, Sutton Place, and other well-known remains, will show what may be done with this splendid material if handled rightly; but those who designed them have passed away and not left many successors. The view from the upper rooms of the castle must have been grand; it embraced some of the finest landscapes in England. Here Mary Queen of Scots was detained on her road from Bolton to Tutbury Castle in Staffordshire. Perhaps she was more of a guest than a prisoner, and but for her own misdoings she might have remained a guest in England to the end; but her duplicity and ingratitude to Elizabeth compelled the English Queen to deprive her first of her liberty, and at last of her life, though this was only when she found out that her Scottish "sister" was implicated in a plot of which the first act was to be her own assassination. I found in America some years ago an old Life of Mary, in two volumes, by a Dr. Stuart of Edinburgh, and written

strongly in her favour; but it is impossible to read this without being, like her Scottish subjects, almost appalled at her manifold sins and wickednesses. They were the ones to imprison her; and she escaped from their anger to Elizabeth, who, if she could have cleared away the crimes laid to her, would have used her good offices to restore her to her throne; but she had not been long in England before she plotted with Philip of Spain—who contrived what is known as the "Spanish" Inquisition, to distinguish it in wickedness from all other inquisitions the world has known—to restore her, and even to introduce his racks and faggots into England. One is almost bewildered to read her defence at Fotheringay, when she coolly says, after alluding to her twenty years of captivity, which but for her own doings would have secured her the treatment of the most honoured guest, "I scrupled not to beseech the princes, my allies, to employ their arms to relieve me, nor will I deny that I have endeavoured to promote the advantage and interest of the persecuted Catholics in England." This is recorded in the old Life of Mary I have just named, though probably Camden preserved the speech which gives a half-denial to her complicity with the Babbington plot. Now, however, her complicity stands out in the glare of day. Much of her personal influ-

ence was owing to her lustrous beauty, and no one can see her portrait at Antwerp, with what Antonio calls the "smiling cheek," without saying also with him, "Oh what a goodly outside falsehood hath!"

Ashby-de-la-Zouch, by a singular coincidence, was visited by her son, James I., and here he and his whole court were entertained in great splendour by the Earl of Huntingdon. Their stay lasted for seventeen days. Anne of Denmark and her son Henry, who was said to be by far the most respectable of the Stuarts, stayed here in the first place, and James soon afterwards joined them; this was in the first year of his reign.

Then Ashby Castle was in its grandeur, and we can trace out at great distances from the present ruins the lines of ancient walls, which at some future day may delight an explorer who has permission to excavate. There must be under the fallow lands many invaluable specimens of ancient domestic architecture, such as canopies and chimneypieces, that might be copied in modern residences. The one shown on a previous page is not very costly in design, and it could be enlarged or contracted, though retaining the same features. Grose, in his "Antiquities," gives two drawings of Ashby Castle, and speaks of its former splendour. There were, he says, at the time of the visit of James,

CASTLE, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

thirty knights, whose worldly circumstances may not have been very prosperous for the time, but they were at any rate of knightly condition; and they served at table in velvet gowns, and were decorated with gold chains round their necks. Once more was Ashby Castle conspicuous in the Stuart family, when the Earl of Huntingdon garrisoned and held it against the forces of Cromwell. Like all other castles that supported the Royalist cause, Ashby had to succumb to the Lord Protector; and we learn that on August 29, 1648, the command was given to Lord Grey of Groby. He was directed to keep the Duke of Hamilton a close prisoner in its walls, and to let him have no communication with outer friends. Among other notable prisoners that the Parliamentarian army had consigned to the walls of Ashby, was the Earl of Cambridge, who was detained, as Nicholls' "Leicestershire" says, "for high treason." When we consider the great strength of the walls of the castle, and its vastness even in ruin, we are tempted to suppose that the fighting must have been terrific, and the bombarding powers of the guns almost comparable with our own modern artillery; but the fact is that we often are mistaken in looking at the remains of a castle which has been reduced by Cromwell, if we suppose that all the desolation we see has been due to the storm of

the battle. Ashby Castle, when the garrison of the Hastings left it, was probably not much altered in its outward appearance; a few shot-marks made by insignificant field guns, and probably a broken gate or two, would be nearly the total damage. The destruction of all such places commenced when the strife was over, and when Parliament had leisure to look around and devise measures for the public safety. To leave great feudal fortresses in every county would in those days have been only to invite another rising for Charles, for these would be easily repaired and strengthened. Accordingly, a Parliamentary committee was appointed to consider which houses should stand; the destruction of Ashby by undermining was decreed, and the Earl of Huntingdon went to dwell at his residence in Donnington Park. Warwick Castle yet stands entire; and the kingdom would possess many such Baronial residences, were it not that the fear of a Jacobite rising necessitated their abolition.

After investigating the castle, we returned to dinner at the "Queen's Head," a "commercial and posting" house. It is called an Hotel, though one seems always to prefer the word Inn in the country parts; it is more homely and English. Still, it is out of fashion, and is

CASTLE, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH, FROM THE COURTYARD.

only used for very small road-side houses, as a general rule. Let the name, however, be as it may, it is pleasing to chronicle any hostelry where one has been well served, and this can be fairly done in the instance of the "Queen's Head." There needs no letter to *The Times* here. We had some large soles, well browned, and served with shrimp sauce (fish comes direct from Lynn Regis), and a dish of beefsteaks that Bucklersbury could not have excelled, for half-a-crown each; a jug of Leicester ale for sixpence, in which price seem to have been included celery and a Stilton cheese; and we were furthermore supplied with a bottle of excellent claret at four shillings. These particulars would not have been entered upon, but, as luck would have it, I found a letter in the same house written to *The Daily Telegraph* by a victim to Continental charges, and, he even seems to say, to Continental cookery, and I could not help being reminded of the absurd adulation that even in Shakespeare's time was bestowed on Continental fashions and usages: Lovell, for example, tells Lord Sands how he has been cut out in his schemes of advancement: "A French song and a fiddle has no fellow;" and honest Sands says, in words that should be printed for innkeepers in England:—

> An honest countryman, as I am, beaten
> A long time out of play, may bring his plain song
> And have an hour of hearing; and, by'r lady,
> Held current music too.

In the Castle grounds is the church of St. Helen's, and it is full of historical interest. The chapel shown on the next page is a fine example of broken lines, yet uniting very harmoniously; the chimney starting from a buttress is very happy and suggestive. It is believed that this part of the church, and the room over, and a great part of the chancel, was at one time used for the Huntingdon Grammar School; and indeed there would seem to be some reason for the supposition, if the walls inside are of any value as documentary evidence. There are the places where knives have been sharpened, and the initials and emblems that are peculiar to a boys' school, and which may be found equally at a village school, or at Eton and Harrow. The part of the west end here shown has escaped the general demolition of the church, for, alas! it must be admitted that the lust for destroying old parish churches has reached Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Of course it is unfashionable to desire to see an old front preserved, and walls are rechiselled to represent new masonry. I have spent now three years in travelling over the more

remote parts of England, and I say with sorrow that the constant destruction of ancient churches, and that

ST. HELEN'S, ASHBY.

in the most fatal and insidious form, is disheartening indeed. The picturesque rust of ages, so dear to the

laity and so distasteful to the clergy, is now becoming hard to meet with. The history of these demolitions is simple, and one of them is very like another. A rector or vicar is appointed to a living, and he has no knowledge of, or sympathy with, his new charge—at least, so far as the building is concerned. There are black oak pews of Queen Anne's time, and perhaps a gallery of the same date quaintly perched between the nave arches; whilst a round-headed Jacobean window has its tale to tell of some benefactor. Of course there is incongruity; nobody denies that; but it is all of interest and value, and even the oak pew of the end of last century represents a period quite as remote from our own as it was from the Edwardian age. The new incumbent is just able to tell the date of moulding or enrichment, and he appeals at once to his congregation to sweep away the venerable incrustations that have grown through the building, and have it made like it might, or could, or should have looked, indefinite centuries ago. Of course every one now knows the date of a door or window or arch-moulding; and I think a further test ought to be required of any clergyman who seeks to demolish an old building, and he should at least say, for example, whether the mouldings—supposing they belong to a conventual

church—are Cistercian or Benedictine. Let him answer such a test as this before he obtains his faculty for demolition, and many a fine old interior of the time of Anne or the early Hanovers will be saved. To those who, like church "restorers"—save the mark! —have waged such war on all appertaining to Queen Anne's time, it must be embarrassing to find that, less than useless as all household furniture of the period was until very lately, it is now commanding the highest price in the market. I do not wish to see it reproduced, but at least one may get a gleam of comfort from seeing the spindle-formed legs and violin backs keenly sought after by those who are demolishing work of the same period in churches. Often I have been asked what I would do with the old churches, for, like everything else, they must be going to decay; and all I can say is, Repair, but do not restore, and leave the time-stained livery of lichens and age. If a front is ruinous, examine well how deep the damage is, shore and prop up, probe the mortar, and add fresh mortar wherever it requires raking out. Where delicate tracery is in peril, chisel a few new stones if necessary to replace any very decayed ones, and let these be tinted to the tone of the old. One is often shocked now to see a new stone inserted in gray old ones; the constructor

has forgotten its colour altogether, though so little care would have removed the jarring patchwork appearance. Hotly was this view contested and frowned down years ago in the various architectural societies; but now more humane counsels are beginning to prevail; a stone coloured to match a wall, or a stain on new oak, was called a "sham"—almost as gross a one as artificial ruins, or a manufactured pedigree—the real issue being misunderstood. The advocates for requiring new stones or oak to be tied down to their raw colours could let the artistic effect remain, and logically keep themselves secure by means of a guide, counting the stones or the oak canopies, and ticking off for the use of visitors the new ones in a handbook. The first point in restoration is to banish all conceits or dogmas, and to let the building, thoroughly strengthened, be as it was, say, when Queen Victoria came to the throne. Surely there is historic interest enough in her reign to mark a period, and so spare us the bald restorations by which every feature fifty years old is swept away. It is so easy for a new incumbent to get a faculty to do almost anything with his church, and his position places the congregation at so great a disadvantage when he wants the money! There are not many clergymen now who are quite ignorant of architecture. Most of

them can at any rate tell the age of a leaf or moulding; and when they are appointed to an old church that has no associations for them, the temptation to give their little knowledge an airing is often too great to be withstood; and the writer knows by bitter experience what it is to find some old church—the bright spot in a village or landscape—altered out of all knowledge, and made as prim and straight as one that has just been built. Before a stone is condemned, it should be considered whether some of the new solutions of silicate would not preserve it effectually, and so leave the front in its original state. No wood-carvings are so rotten but that they can be preserved in their native colour, and even at the same time have the seeds of future decay removed, and this by a beautiful process invented by Mr. W. G. Rogers, and described in the *Builder* for November 14, 1864.

One of the chapels of the church at Ashby-de-la-Zouch belongs to the Huntingdon family before mentioned, and there is a noble example of an altar tomb in the middle of it, with a knight and lady, apparently about a hundred years older than the time when Mary was the guest of the Earl of Huntingdon. But in another corner of the chapel is a monument by Ruysbeck to Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, who lived in the

early part of the eighteenth century, and was the foremost among the gay in even that relaxed period. She had a severe illness, and her life was despaired of—indeed, the beautiful lines that are commonly attributed to the Princess Amelia, beginning with "Unthinking, idle, wild, and young," are ascribed sometimes to her. She used to frequent the chapels of the Calvinistic Methodists, and belonged at last to them. She was the daughter of Washington Shirley, afterwards created Earl Ferrers, and was born in 1709. She married the Earl of Huntingdon at the age of nineteen, and died at the age of eighty-two. She had vast resources, and during her lifetime she built sixty-four chapels. Her monument in the Hastings chapel is thoroughly characteristic of Ruysbeck and his age, and her medallion on it is finely chiselled, and shows a thoughtful and pleasant face.

There are various remains at Ashby marked with the architecture of the Hastings family. The "Bull's Head Inn," a small hostelry, has the Huntingdon coat of arms in size quite disproportionate to its front. Not far from here is Gopsall Park, the seat of Lord Howe; and here Handel wrote his "Messiah." But all the country round abounds with beauty and historical associations, and it only requires to be a little better

known to once more fill the hospitable inns with visitors.

Reference has been made to a "Cheshire cat," and the origin of the expression "grinning like a Cheshire cat" was discussed, but I have since met with a work on Cheshire proverbs and sayings, by Mr. Egerton Legh. He took great pains with the subject, and was a thorough Cheshire man. He gives two probable versions of the saying, though he does not consider either of them satisfactory. He says that at one time Cheshire cheeses were fashioned in the form of a cat, and sold in Bath with whiskers, etc., and this may have suggested to the habitués of that watering-place the application of the term to some old lady who was not quite in the prime of youth and beauty. Of course it would easily become spread through England if it originated in Bath. Another supposition is that the crest of a lion was common to some Cheshire families, such as the Egertons of Tatton, and indeed his own family. The signs of the roadside inns in the neighbourhood generally had the heraldic device of the landowner, and the artistic efforts of the sign-painter resulted in a grin that amused the passer-by, and gave the cue to the term. But against this derivation, which

Mr. Legh is by no means satisfied with, must be put the circumstance that other counties than Cheshire are equally well supplied with lions for family devices, and these are quite as liberally distributed over the inn doors. The derivation given previously would seem to gain strength by the circumstance that a tradition actually exists in some parts of the forest to that effect; and though wild-cats may indeed have lingered in remote parts like the Peak in Derbyshire, they would not be noticed to the same extent as their relatives in Cheshire, where those who hunted them were among the leading families in England, and their colloquial phrases would be copied. Of course domestic cats become wild, and lose much of their sleek appearance, and will often do more damage to a game-cover than half-a-dozen foxes, for the latter can be guarded against, which the other poachers cannot be. Still, these will never become like the real Cheshire wild-cats, now probably extinct.

CHAPTER III.

YORK, BARNARD CASTLE, ETC.

York—Market-cart journeys—Stonegate—St. Mary's Abbey—Roman remains—Manor-house and its history—Strafford and Laud—King Hudson's house, York—Knaresborough—Barnard Castle—Origin of Barry Lyndon—Darlington.

YORK, the great capital of the north, might by some hardly be considered one of our country towns; but in many respects it stands pre-eminent as an example of the goal our forefathers used to look to as the termination of their long journey through country lanes. It does not require an old man to remember the days when in a walk or a drive through a country lane we should be sure to meet with a covered waggon standing at the gate of a farmyard, and well filled with cauliflowers and carrots and other vegetable delicacies, to say nothing of a hamper of wild pigeons and rabbits, contributed over-hours by the farmer's sons. Those who were to harness it up and plod at a slow pace,

often ten or fifteen miles, to the nearest market, had been asleep since seven o'clock in the afternoon, and an hour after midnight would see them drowsily unbolting the stable doors in the yard, and leading out a horse apparently as unprepared for the road as they were. It took, indeed, but little time for them to resume the thread of their slumbers, as the waggon heavily plodded along the highway.

I remember a park-wall in the county where this is written, that bounded the demesne of a county magistrate. Conscientious he was to a degree, but dyspeptic; and he spent Saturday afternoons in taking the names of the wights who had either returned home without reins, or who, having fallen asleep, had become liable, by the strangest of legal fictions, for the penalties for reckless driving. Some of them were wont to say that the midnight sleep in passing his house was the most delightful in the week. He was supposed to be resting in purple and fine linen, and the yokels might have quoted Prince Henry:

> Sleep with it now!
> Yet not so sound and half so deeply sweet
> As he whose brow with homely biggen bound
> Snores out the watch of night.

But all journeys have an end, and it would hardly

be possible to find a more perfect specimen of the old country town than we can see in York on market-day —the farmers who have reached their haven all wearing smocks elaborately tattooed on the breast, and the broad-wheeled carts uptilted in a row. Some of the streets have been little altered for centuries, and notably the one (Stonegate) that is given as the frontispiece to this book is a succession of picturesque gables, in one of which Hugo Goez first set up his printing-press in the time of the Tudors. Market booths are soon put together in the great square, and in many of these a patois is spoken that would leave an average southerner in darkness as to the sentiments of the speakers. In addition to the great beauty of the architecture of the York houses, the local colour lends them a charm.

Anything like a history of York will not be looked for here, though indeed it is one of the most interesting cities in England, and it has seen both prosperity and reverses. Tradition ascribes the origin of York to a British king who lived when David was ruler in Judæa; but however that may be, its antiquities are abundant and real, and recent excavations have brought to light vast stores of relics that were in use in the second century of the Christian era.

It would not be possible to select a more fitting site

from which to contemplate the history of the city than the gardens of St. Mary's Abbey. This was one of the most important religious houses in the north of England. Its abbot was mitred—that is to say, he had a seat by virtue of his office in the House of Lords; and only one other on the north of the Trent could boast of this dignity. The revenues amounted to an aggregate sum that, after careful consideration, I should say was equal to £37,000 sterling per annum. The delicate tracery of the windows, and the lifelike foliage of the ruined capitals, will always be models for architects to imitate. Yet even these are only the dregs of what has been carried away. The "King's manor-house," as the residence of the Stuarts was called, is in the gardens, and was built in part from the abbey spoils. In 1701, again, York Castle, being in need of repairs, drew on it for stones, and even a lime-kiln was erected on the estate to burn the carvings into lime, until in 1827 the Yorkshire Philosophical Society obtained a grant of the land and ruins, and erected their museum and gardens.

The Hospitium, a venerable building that was used of old for the accommodation of travellers, remains. It is hardly necessary to say that all wayfarers were entitled to free quarters at any abbey in England, and the Hospitium was the place that was set apart for

their entertainment. This building has been rented for a Roman museum, and within its walls the astonished visitor may contemplate the glories of old York—for

MANOR-HOUSE OR "KING'S MANOR," YORK.

recent excavations for the new railway station have brought to light some of the purest Roman relics in England. York was little more than half the age of

New York when it became, under Roman rule, a city of palaces and luxury ; that, too, when it was in the wilderness, and when the communication by sea was in pinnaces that would not be thought fit to cross Windermere in a summer's storm. Yet there are mosaic pavements that would be now almost beyond the reach of the wealthy, and these are fortunately transferred here, in vast fragments and in all but entirety. There are jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and every device for articles of adornment. There are clear glass jars, and bottles and lamps of beautiful form, and nearly every variety of earthenware, including patterns that have recently been introduced into our manufactures, and are considered novelties. Then, leaving aside the cameos and brooches, there are small statuettes of amazing excellence, in jet and bronze and ivory ; one female figure in ivory is not surpassed in refined beauty by any model I ever saw. Nearly all these relics were procured from the foundations of the railway station, and this was outside the city walls. There is no doubt that York stands over a treasure-house of riches that would seem, could we know of them, like the dream of an enthusiast. Only let any one visit this museum, and see the grand results of a small excavation, and then, with a map of York before him, make even a

moderate conjecture of what is hidden below the soil.

Yet York is not dependent on this for its ancient eminence as the principal city in Britain. Two Roman emperors lived and died within its limits, and the son of one of them was Constantine the Great. He was in York at the time of his father's death, and the Sixth Legion proclaimed him Emperor. Three of the most learned jurists of Rome lived in York, men who helped to frame a code of laws that is the model—one might almost say the final authority—both in England and France, whenever cases that come under its rulings are similar.

It is a weary tale to tell how York followed the fortunes of the rest of England when the Romans finally left the country. Barbarian hordes, of whom we know almost nothing, overran the land, and all English history is for a time lost in chaos. More light breaks upon it in the Saxon times; but we must come to the eleventh century of the Christian era before we emerge into any reliable narrative, and unhappily that is a gloomy one. The Danes, who had captured York, put the Norman garrison to the sword; and William exacted the terrible penalty of depopulating the lands between York and Durham, and putting to

death, historians say, 100,000 of the inhabitants. Very soon after this York again became famous as the centre of great ecclesiastical power, and, still standing in St. Mary's gardens, we can see the three great towers of the minster that held such unbounded sway during the middle ages. These abbey gardens have a belt of fine elms, and in some points of view the towering minster forms a noble picture in combination with them and the ruins of St. Mary's Abbey. Nearly every traveller has seen York Minster, and those who have not are familiar with its appearance, both from drawings and descriptions. Suffice it to say that, if a line were fixed on any angle of the building and drawn tightly round it, it would measure about a quarter of a mile, and every part of this vast edifice is covered with the richest and grandest carvings known in architecture. Every period of design is represented, from the rude Norman imitations of the Roman work, with which the island was even then studded, to the time when the eighth Henry laid his heavy hand on monasteries; and as I write this I am reminded, by referring to a date, that this is the fiftieth anniversary of the day on which one Jonathan Martin fired York Minster and burned the wonderful carvings of the stalls and roof. A national subscription amounting to some £65,000 was soon

raised to restore it, but such a sum would have to be more than doubled to enable a contractor to perform similar work at the present day. A second fire almost as destructive broke out in another part of the vast pile only eleven years after. Some recollections of this minster are not very pleasant. The Jews used to keep in its wardenship a record of their loans, and the populace, not remembering that the borrowers became borrowers of their own free will, broke into the cathedral, and burned all the documents. But unhappily they did not do this without having previously committed great and wanton outrage on a law-abiding people. When Richard I. came to the throne, the "Lion Heart" permitted any amount of massacre and persecution to be perpetrated on his Jewish subjects. These were very numerous and powerful in York; indeed, their principal quarters in Market Street and Layerthorpe were until recently called Jubbargate and Jewbury. A simple narration of the massacre seems hardly credible, especially if we remember that in those times the principal actors were merely mulcted in nominal fines. One Benet appears to have been the principal Jew in the city, and his house was attacked by an armed mob, and he and his family murdered. About 500 others, being forewarned, fled to the castle, and took their gold

with them; and as they refused permission to the warden to enter, the sheriff permitted the populace, and especially their debtors, to attack them in their stronghold. Hunger overcame them, but as they could not hope for humanity from their assailants, they set fire to the castle, and hid such wealth as could not be destroyed. Then these poor creatures slew each other to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, and a few, offering to become Christians, surrendered to the mob, but were immediately slain. Richard, who was in France, seemed to think the proceeding was hardly justifiable, and ordered a commission of inquiry, which closed the whole matter, very much in the interests of the wrong-doers. We need not remove from the spot in St. Mary's Abbey grounds, where we are supposed to be taking a retrospect of York, before we are reminded of other scenes in history that gradually lead us on to a time when the chief city of the New World is singularly connected with the chief city of Yorkshire. The white rose of York was but a thorny one for England, as indeed may be said of its rival of Lancaster, and York was for a long time the centre of the feuds that raged between the contending houses. Looking back at this distance of time, how almost incredible it seems that Englishmen should have shed each other's

blood so terribly for simply a war of succession! The merits of the candidates were not at all in question—if, indeed, they had any merits; it was merely a family dispute! The wars of Cromwell we can well understand; then, there was a great principle at stake. Liberty and freedom were fighting their battles against tyranny; and the same issues were fought for in the great war of Independence. But in the Wars of the Roses the rivals signified but little to the people, and the people were of no consequence at all in the eyes of the rivals. Yet the slain in a single battle-field in England have been as many as ten times the losses at Waterloo. There is no doubt that Falstaff's contemptuous "Food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better," was the common style of language. And after the battle of Wakefield, as an example of how such times harden the mind, Queen Margaret ordered the Duke of York's head to be cut off and fixed on the top of Micklegate Bar, with a paper crown:

> Off with his head, and set it on York gates,
> So York may overlook the town of York;

and there it remained for two years.

But in St. Mary's gardens there is another building called the King's Manor, and now used as a blind

asylum, that figured prominently in the future of both America and England. In the year 1536, after the suppression of monasteries, the celebrated Yorkshire rebellion called the "Pilgrimage of Grace" broke out. It was led by Robert Aske, who marched with 40,000 men to reinstate the monks and nuns in their religious houses. In York alone were nine great houses, besides eighteen parish churches, and many other religious establishments. The feeling in the city was strongly in favour of the old religion, and though it was very late at night when they returned, the friars "sung matins the same night." The rising was suppressed, and Aske executed; but this gave rise to the celebrated "Council of the North," of which, a century later, Wentford, Earl of Strafford, became president. He seems at first to have had some desire to side with the friends of freedom. When he was deposed from the office of Sheriff of Yorkshire, he was foremost in the House of Commons in urging the Petition of Right; his language then was that, "If he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire, it was his desire that he might be set as a beacon on a hill, for all men else to wonder at." And certainly he had his desire. He soon was admitted to a seat in the Royal Council, and in

him his master found the most ready tool that perhaps his dominions afforded. He fairly outdid even Charles in his extravagant pretensions of Royal prerogative, and declared in so many words that he would vindicate the monarchy for ever from all restraint of subjects, and make the Royal will law to the end. There are two portraits of him by Vandyck; one at Wentworth House, in Yorkshire, and the other at Blenheim; in both he is dictating to his secretary before his execution, and the dark defiant face, still full of purpose, and indeed not without a look of hatred, almost haunts one's recollection after seeing either picture.

When Strafford was made the Lord President of the North he took up his abode in "King's Manor," shown on a previous page, and prepared the way for his representative, Laud, to stop all emigration to America. Strafford's arms are emblazoned over a door, and it is even said to have formed a charge against him that he had used a Royal palace to carry his armorial bearings, though this was innocency itself as compared with the lightest of the real charges against him. The arms, however, will always interest any stranger in visiting the city, and they are generally pointed out. Strafford went over as Lieutenant to Ireland, and Laud may almost be said to have ruled in

England in his place. The Puritans, who desired to leave England and worship in their own manner in America, were stopped, and English gaols were filled almost to suffocation with some of the noblest Englishmen that ever lived. Pharaoh-like, he would not let them go even into the wilderness, and if a report of one of his embargoes is correct, verily he met his reward. There is a library in Liverpool called the "Brown Library," so called because it was built by Sir William Brown, a great American merchant, at a large cost, and presented to Liverpool as a free institution. It is very rich in historical works, and in one of these I saw it stated that Laud had stopped both Hampden and Cromwell from joining their friends in Massachusetts. Some colour is afforded to this statement by the circumstance that Hampden had actually purchased and paid for a tract of land on the Narragansett. Could Laud only have known what he was doing, he would most certainly have told them to rise up and go, and take their flocks, and their herds, and their little ones.

The house shown on the next page was the home of George Hudson, the great "Railway King." He was born in 1800, and apprenticed to a draper, but soon commenced business for himself, and speculated in

railway stock. Success seemed to follow every undertaking he engaged in, and he was elected chairman of

"KING" HUDSON'S HOUSE.

the North Midland Railway. His acquaintance and friendship were sought by the highest personages in the

land, and it was at last considered that his name on a board of directors was a guarantee of success. He has made by the premiums on shares as much as £100,000 in a single day. His connection with the South-Eastern Railway, however, led to exposures, shares soon fell with rapidity as great as that with which they had risen, and every board-room was closed against him. He retired to the Continent with what little of his once vast fortune he could save, and was spared for many years to soliloquise on the transitory glory of human crowns.

Yorkshire is the land of romance and poetry. The Cistercians, who always selected the most beautiful sites for their houses, had them studded over some parts of the country almost as closely as the rules of their order would permit. Turner used to say that Yorkshire contained the most beautiful scenery in England; though, indeed, Derby can fairly hold its own against it. Not only religious houses, but the remains of baronial castles, abound in all directions, and these have continually figured in history.—If we take the Ripon Road from York, we shall pass through the romantic town of Knaresborough, beautifully situated on the Nidd, which runs through a gorge, and is a succession of still clear pools and rapids. The castle

here was once the residence of the brilliant but thoughtless Piers Gaveston, the favourite of Edward II., and the man through whose assistance he endeavoured to throw off the yoke of the Barons; but they were made of rather sterner stuff than he had calculated. They were a match for even Edward's great sire; as, for example, when Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, refused to join the expedition to Flanders, the King said, with a strong asseveration, "Sir Earl, you shall either go or hang;" to which he replied, with the same expletive that his Majesty had used; "Sir King, I shall neither go nor hang." And Edward himself finally admitted that he was in the wrong. Of course the favourite and his master were trifles light as air to the men of whom Bigod was only a type, and Gaveston was captured at Scarborough and beheaded. A short way from Knaresborough Castle is a cave called St. Robert's Cave, which led to the conviction of Eugene Aram, the hero of Hood's poem and of one of Bulwer's works. The murder was discovered through finding the skeleton of his victim here.

The dropping well of course has been so often described, that it may be said there are few persons in England who are not acquainted with its appearance and powers. If we proceed to Ripon, we shall find

little beyond the Cathedral of interest. The city is modern, and the houses are not very picturesque; indeed, in the item of picturesqueness it is about on a level with Selby; but only about three miles distant is Fountains Abbey, which is certainly one of the most perfect remains of a monastic building in England. It has fallen into ruins, not by the axes and hammers of the Puritans, but by its own decay.

One of the most delightful places in the north of England is Barnard Castle, of which a drawing over the market-place is shown on the next page. The castle itself stands on a vast rocky eminence over the Tees, and its walls include an area of something like six acres. Barnard Castle has figured so often in the history of the north, that its chronicles would almost be the history of England, at any rate during a considerable part of the Edwardian period.

The annals of this district also are especially fertile in inspiring the writers of romance. They figure in Wordsworth's "White Doe of Rylstone," in Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby," and conspicuously in Sir Walter Scott's "Rokeby;" and, indeed, till commencing this series, I never knew the real history of Thackeray's Barry Lyndon. Repulsively bad as he makes him, he is not so wicked as his prototype, Stoney Robinson, con-

cerning whom the actual facts of the case are these. Towards the latter part of the eighteenth century, the Countess of Strathmore resided occasionally on one of

MARKET-PLACE, BARNARD CASTLE.

her vast estates at Barnard Castle. She was youthful, accomplished, and very pleasant, and her wealth was almost boundless. The Earl of Strathmore had died

while she was still young, and she was thus once more mistress of her own hand. Her estates were her own inheritance as Miss Bowes; she had not succeeded to them as the widow of the Earl of Strathmore. She had many admirers, and one of them, who was himself also wealthy, gained favour in her eyes; but an Irish lieutenant in a line regiment contrived by much ingenuity to supersede him. He had enjoyed nuptial bliss before, and by a long course of cruelty, and ultimately by throwing her down a flight of stairs, had succeeded in disposing of his first wife, and possessing himself of her fortune of thirty thousand pounds. This he soon lost in gambling, and hearing of the wealthy countess, he contrived but too well to bring her within his toils. He waylaid her in London, he bribed her servants, cajoled her friends, and ultimately succeeded in procuring the long-wished-for introduction. Being what is called a "sporting man," he was inventive, and adopted the following ingenious stratagem. He wrote scandalous articles in the "Morning Post," and answered them himself, indignantly; and when the Countess of Strathmore once asked if she had "no friend," he started up, challenged the editor—with whom he had long before made matters pleasant—presented himself to the countess with bandages that had no wounds

under them, described the fury of the engagement, and soon became lord of two noble London houses and of no fewer than five castles and palaces in the country. So great were her estates, that when, contrary to the law, he commenced to cut down the timber, he had to give it up, as the English timber-merchants were glutted with stock. He squandered hundreds of thousands in gambling, and crippled even his wife's resources, large as they were, and invented each day some new method by which to humiliate and torture her, even when she still was devoted to him; till at last he brought himself within the reach of the law, and Lord Mansfield swept down upon him, and the nation to which he had long been a scandal was gratified by seeing him consigned to the King's Bench Prison, where he spent the remaining twenty-two years of his life. His wife's family have recovered their property, and one of them is now building a library and museum for Castle Barnard at an enormous cost.

At Darlington, near here, is a noble parish church almost as large as a cathedral, which was built by the celebrated Hugh de Pudsey. This town is of considerable size, and is situated on the pleasant river Skerne. We break suddenly upon a view of the great church with a few trees, reflected in it, and set off by a surround-

ing of old houses. I had wished to sketch this beautiful scene, but having attempted to include North Allerton on my road back to York, I lost my chance, and found an altered town, without much interest, if a little fine wrought-iron work in some of the older houses is excepted.

CHAPTER IV.

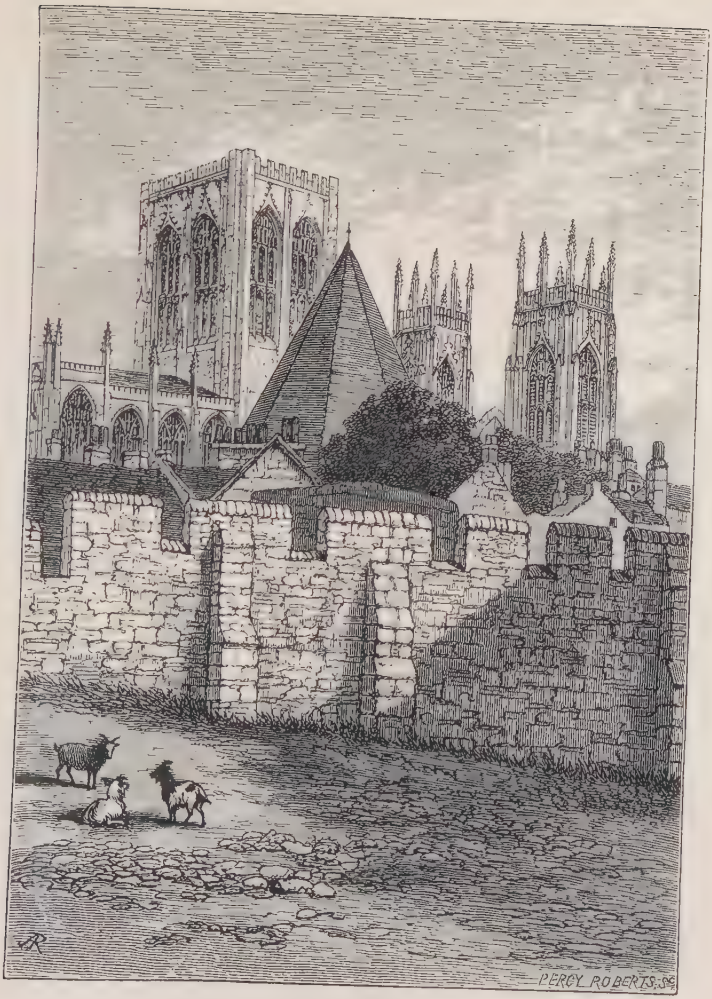
YORK AND THE WASHINGTON FAMILY.

York and its interest to Americans — The Washington family — Henry Washington the Royalist—The Lysons family—South Cave Castle—Rowley, Mass.— South Cave Church—Market Weighton — Bitterns and wild fowl in Yorkshire—Beverley—Howden—Howden town and the legend connected with it —Wressel Castle.

If we remain in York, we shall find country towns, and country churches, and country seats, in absolute profusion in every direction. The station hotel here needs no recommendation from me, or introduction: it is known to the travelling public as one of the best, and indeed one of the finest in England. The plan, the arrangements, and the furniture, are all on a splendid scale; and if we consider what we have in the way of accommodation, we should be out of court if we complained of the charges. It is more to the purpose, perhaps, to chronicle small country inns which have been liberally kept by the proprietors, and where the

wayfarer finds good fare and cleanliness. To say that these have perished out of the land is a libel; and with one year of English travel they would blossom again in every county.

York is interesting to Americans as well as Englishmen, on account of the name, though, as has been said, this name is derived from a different source; but the founder of the States, George Washington, was descended from a Yorkshire family of importance, as were also Penn and Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts. These three were merely private English gentlemen, men of education and leisure, who might have lived and died unknown, had their lot been cast in happier times. To have represented their counties in Parliament, or even sat at the quarter-sessions in the East Riding, or Suffolk, might have been the extent of their ambition; and certainly such offices would have limited their earthly eminence when their little life was rounded with a sleep. But they fled from England from different causes. Winthrop and his followers escaped from the persecution of the Stuarts, and they only wished to worship in their own way; but the Washington family fled from Cromwell, as being implicated in an attempt to overthrow his power and restore the Stuart dynasty. Fervent loyalty was



YORK, FROM THE BATTLEMENTS.

always the characteristic of the Washingtons, and even George Washington himself fought for George III. against the French, until it was no longer possible for him to endure the intolerable demands of that stolid monarch. In Cromwell's reign it will be remembered that an attempt was made to restore Charles II., and John Washington and his brother were implicated. But they were more fortunate than their companion-in-arms the Earl of Derby. They managed to get away to America; but Lord Derby, less fortunate, was captured and executed at Bolton; and the quaint old house in Chester where he spent his last night is an object of great interest with all visitors to the city. It is now divided into cottages, but a richly-carved oak front speaks of its former splendour. The nephew of John Washington was Sir Henry Washington, who defended the city of Worcester in the cause of Charles I., and indeed held out to the last, with only scanty means. He was repeatedly called upon to surrender, as his affairs were hopeless, and was promised that his life should be spared; but he refused to do so till he had the permission of Charles; and at last, when resistance was no longer possible, he wrote to Fairfax, who was marching in triumph from Haddington, the following letter:—

Sir—It is acknowledged by your books, and by report of your quarter, that the King is in some of your armies.—That granted, it may be easy for you to procure his Majesty's commands for the disposal of this garrison. Till then I shall make good the trust reposed on me. As for conditions, if I shall be necessitated, I shall make the best I can. The worst I know, and fear not. If I had, the profession of a soldier had not been begun, nor so long continued, by

Your Excellency's humble servant,

HENRY WASHINGTON.

This was in the year 1646, and five years later the Mayor of Worcester, Thomas Lysons, was sent to Warwick Castle in imprisonment till he should be tried in London for proclaiming Charles II. the rightful King of England. This Lysons was the direct ancestor of the Colonel Lysons (now Sir Daniel) who held a command in Canada, and who will be remembered by many of my American readers as the genial founder of the Montreal Sketching Club and other kindred societies. That the mayor should have been consigned to Warwick Castle will not be wondered at, when we remember that Lord Warwick himself had so far meditated an emigration in Laud's time, that he secured the proprietorship of the Connecticut Valley. The family of Washington can be traced, however, much further back than the period we are speaking of.

Formerly they held estates in Durham, and the name is spelt variously De Wessyngton and Wessington. In the venerable library of Chester Cathedral, where this is written, Bondo de Wessyngton's name occurs in copies of charters six hundred years old. John Wessington, as appears from Dugdale's "Monasticon," was the prior of Durham in the reigns of Henry V. and Henry VI. He wrote a treatise on the rights and privileges of Durham Cathedral, which is still preserved in the Cotton Library. He held his dignities for thirty years, and was engaged in a dispute with the Pontiff upon certain privileges which the latter wished to encroach upon, but found the prior not so pliable as he could have desired. One of the family, John Washington, lived at Washington, in Lancashire; and his only daughter and heiress married James Lawrence, in the year 1252, bringing him as a dowry a large landed property. His descendant is Mr. Lawrence of Sandywell Park. But the more immediate ancestry of George Washington must be sought in Sulgrave, Northamptonshire. At Sulgrave was a monastery, and it was dissolved by Henry VIII. at the same time as the other religious houses. A large part of its estates were granted to the Washington family; and in the old church of Sulgrave is a

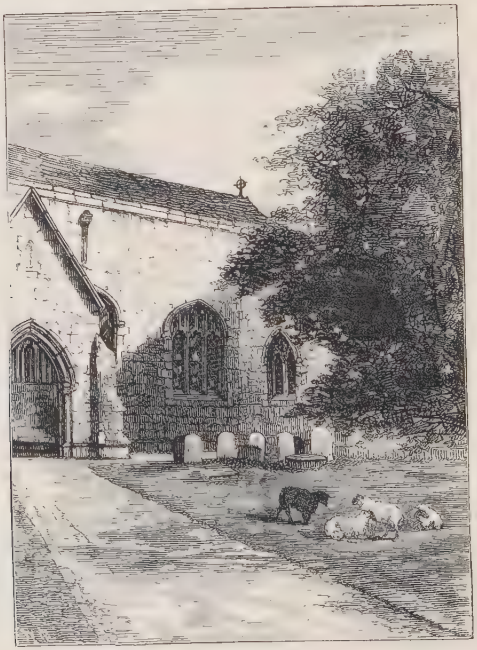
plate of brass, with Lawrence Washington and his wife incised on it, and also his eight sons and nine daughters. Sulgrave is in a pleasant rural part of Eng-

SOUTH CAVE CASTLE, THE SEAT OF THE WASHINGTONS.

land, not far from Banbury and from Whittlebury Forest. The mansion of the Washingtons was probably at one time the prior's dwelling, and altered for their use. Part of it still remains, and is converted into a farm-

house; and in a buttery-hatch is a piece of stained glass with the Washington crest upon it. It is hoped that this picturesque relic may at some future time form a part of the present series. John Washington, of South Cave Castle, was the great-grandson of the lord of the manor of Sulgrave. South Cave Castle, which is engraved above, is reached by the railway that runs between York and Hull. Brough is the nearest station, and from there to South Cave is a walk or drive of three miles. The road is a pleasant one, and lies through a shaded lane, with here and there a long opening, and some comfortable dwellings, set in dark evergreens. A road that turns to the right leads us to Hull and the village of Rowley, which is quite worth a visit, as it was the veritable parent of Rowley, Mass.; indeed, all the inhabitants left Rowley, York, with their vicar, and crossed the ocean to their new home. South Cave Castle is a truly delightful residence, and is well seen from the road—whence, in fact, the drawing here shown is taken. It has, of course, undergone some modernising since the Washingtons resided there; but the dimensions are the same, and the pleasant park is circumscribed by the same boundaries. Plate-glass windows have superseded the old-fashioned mullions and lead lights; and panelled doors have been placed

in frames, instead of the heavy ones studded with nail-heads; but an old engraving I saw in York gives the same walls and elms; and doubtless the rooks are



SOUTH CAVE CHURCH, IN WASHINGTON'S PARK.

lineally descended from those that heralded spring time to John Washington.

In one corner of the park stands South Cave Church, a small but venerable building, in the shadiest of

churchyards. An embattled gateway, with a wrought-iron gate, that leads up to the Hall, juts out on the road opposite to where the view is taken from, and one of the sides of the archway is extended into a quaint lodge, covered with ivy. The wall of the lodge forms a boundary of the churchyard, and the whole group is of exquisite beauty. Of course a private path through the park leads into the chancel, where the family pews are. There is a fine collection of paintings here—one of President Washington, on which a great value is set, among them. The little church has the dignity of being a parish one and possessing a rector; and here the parish records are kept. Unhappily, they are very imperfect; those relating to Washington's great-grandfather are not to be found, and there are others of later date that are very puzzling.

It would appear to have been the opinion of most of the historians of the family that their connection with the Yorkshire property ceased after the emigration in the middle of the seventeenth century; but this is not the case. Henry Washington, variously described as of Symond's Inn and Lincoln's Inn, Doncaster, and Cookham, etc., married Eleanor Harrison, in the year 1689. She was the daughter of Richard Harrison, *armiger;* and the singular part of it is, that he suc-

ceeded to the property in right of his wife. The question naturally arises, who this Henry Washington was; and, curiously enough, it was impossible for us to decide, even with the advantage of being on the spot, with the registers all before us. Various theories suggested themselves to a gentleman who resides not far from South Cave, and has made the Washington family a study; but none are free from difficulty; and it seems to both of us that South Cave Castle has come into the family possession twice over, and Henry Washington is only an episode. He may have been, and probably was, a connection of the gallant defender of Worcester: and it is curious that he had two daughters, Susannah and Elizabeth, whose baptism is duly recorded in the register; Sir Henry, too, had two sisters, also named Susannah and Elizabeth, which would point to these being family names. Susannah died, and is buried at the church in the precincts of the park; and the estate seems to have become the property of her sister, who married John Idell in the year 1719; and they sold it to the present proprietor's family. It is a little singular that after so short a lapse of time there should be the least difficulty in exactly tracing out all the connections of the parties; but in many similar instances the troubled times and

family changes caused records to be mislaid or lost. The Washington narrative only belongs to the present chapter in consequence of its connection with the county of York; and the history of New York (especially so far as its origin is concerned) pertains rather to Holland than to England. In James I.'s time there was a Dutch trading company, and they really founded New York, under the name of New Amsterdam. Indeed, we should have to go to the land of such families as Schuylers, Beekmans, de Lancys, Schenks, or others, whose names speak aloud of their country, to find the corresponding types in Europe. Singularly enough, the best history of the Dutch Republic, and indeed one of the most excellent histories of any local period, was written by an American; and the writer of this article was perfectly confused once in Amsterdam by hearing a Dutch lady quote a passage and compliment him upon what she was pleased to call his countryman's literary excellence. The stigma was, that he was ignorant of the work except by name, though he lost but little time in pulling up arrears on returning to England.

If, after leaving South Cave, the traveller desires to change his route back to York, he can continue his journey to Market Weighton, an old-fashioned town,

as its name would fully imply. Newbald, Hortham, and Sancton are passed; but these are only villages; and by a curious chance I was reminded of the loneliness of the country between the Humber and the North Sea. In walking along the road I saw a man in a velveteen coat looking intently at a swamp that lay some little distance from the roadside, and he motioned to me to stop; but directly after we noticed a bird rise that there was no difficulty in recognising as a bittern, now such a *rara avis*, that if one is shot in any part of England it is considered worth reporting in the provincial papers. The man was a gamekeeper on some neighbouring property, and I was very glad of his company to Market Weighton, for he had had abundant chances of studying wild animals and birds. Rare as bitterns are now, he assured me that his father remembered them as quite common in that part of Yorkshire; and he said that at Hatfield Chace and Thorne Waste, which cover many square miles, and lie to the south of the Market Weighton road, numbers of strange wild fowl are met with; among others, the avoset, the ruffs and reeves, the redshanks and godwits are not uncommon visitors. We had the good fortune to see a peregrine falcon wheeling round some low lands on the right of the road in slow, wide, and majestic circles, and naturally

discussed the object of such a singular flight, which seems to be common to the hawk tribe in all parts of the world. Often have I seen them on American marshes hovering with expanded motionless wings, and, with a slight flutter at the end of each circle, mount up to the altitude they had lost. Some old-fashioned works on natural history speak of these circles as intended to dismay the prey that hawks wish to capture, and say that they lessen them until they find them within their reach; but against this it must be said that, with the exceeding fleetness and keen sight of a hawk, all prey he wishes for is very much within his reach the moment he sees it; and, as my very intelligent companion said, a hawk when after his prey generally flies low, and with somewhat the motion of an owl. He usually keeps along hedgerows or the side of a plantation, and very easily finds a supper. I was pleased to hear a theory I had formed in America confirmed; for when waiting for wild ducks we used to see these birds of prey soaring around in great sweeps, and it seemed most probable they were only taking an airing; indeed, they appeared to be almost in a dreamy state, for even after hearing a shot they would circle round very probably within easy reach of a gun. My gamekeeper friend quite confirmed this; and, as the

passage in "Macbeth" occurred to me at the moment, I quoted the words—

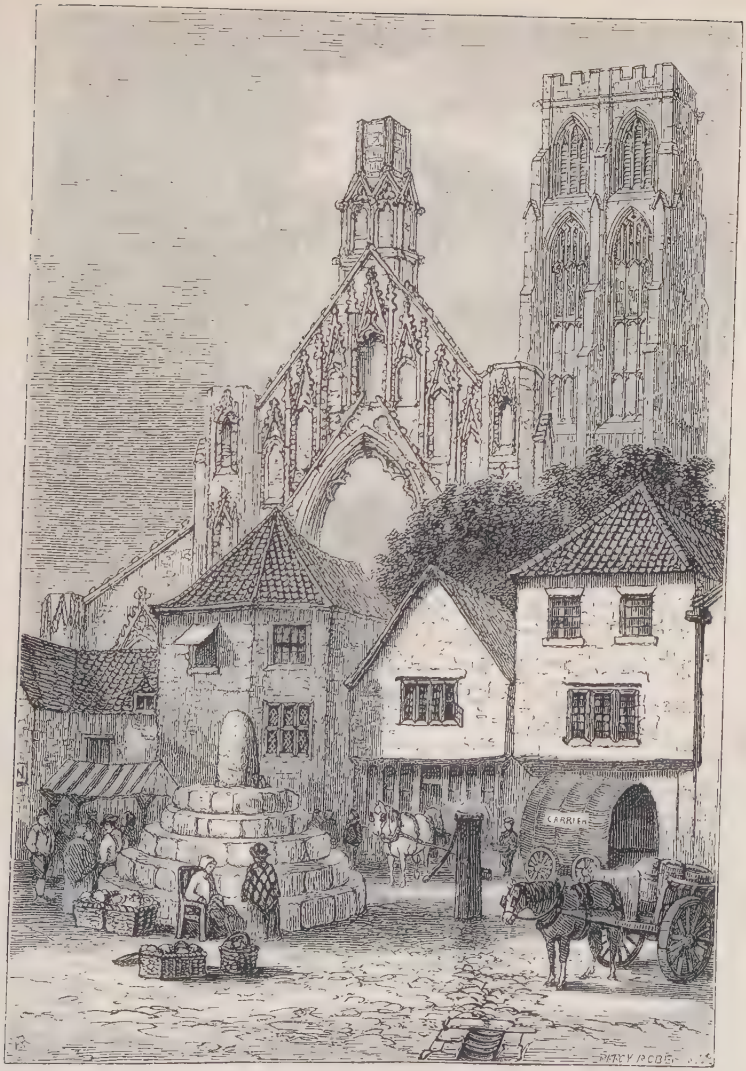
> On Tuesday last
> A falcon towering in her pride of place
> Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

He said that he could well believe this was an actual scene, as when owls are hungry they will take birds in the air, and he might have mistaken the falcon easily for a more dainty meal. In the course of our conversation I learned that two years previously a bustard had been shot in these parts of Yorkshire, and two more had been seen. Now, of course, such birds are regarded as extinct, though at the same time not fewer than five had been seen on Salisbury Plain, and one I saw in the hands of the bird-stuffer. It is a great pity that such noble birds should be allowed to die out, or rather to be exterminated; and we should do well to imitate the Americans in their generous protection of native fowl, and even stop shooting for a season when the gunner threatens to exterminate any particular species. The bustard especially is more capable of domestication than the turkey, as has been proved by more than one experiment; and indeed the latter never loses its desire to roam, or, in the happy language of Earl Worcester to Sir Richard Vernon before the battle of Shrewsbury,

"A fox who ne'er so tame, so cherished and locked up, will have a wild trick of his ancestors." But all walks have an end, and I was sorry to part with my acquaintance after we had arrived at the Devonshire Arms, in Market Weighton.

On one side of this town is Beverley, with its grand Minster and unrivalled parish church of St. Mary; and on the other side is Howden. I was strongly reminded of the origin of the name of Beverley by my conversation with the keeper. Formerly, before drainage and other causes had raised the level of the land to the north of the Humber, floods were of common occurrence, and land-lakes were formed after the subsidence of the waters. From one of these it is now generally supposed that Beverley took its name, and "Bever lea" is only a corruption of "Bever lake." But in the mean time let us take the other road that leads to Howden, a much less known town. Who goes to see Howden now? Yet it is often said by architectural explorers to contain the very finest Gothic remains in England. The roofless chapter-house is one continuous example of the most exquisite and delicate mouldings. There are thirty seats, with ribbed canopies and carved rose-work, and seven windows full of exceedingly beautiful tracery, which, in the absence of any further information,

would seem to belong to the period of Walter Skirlaw, Bishop of Durham, and, indeed, to be his work, for it is commonly believed that he designed the central tower. The history of Howden is curious, and not very pleasant. It is not necessary to say that Alfred the Great freed England from the Danish invaders, established just laws, cultivated literature, and was, perhaps, in a word, the greatest of English monarchs. But his descendant, Ethelred, surnamed the Unready, was in every respect the reverse of his great ancestor. Under his rule the Danes reappeared, and occupied themselves with their old trade of pillage and murder; and it is not a little singular how such deeds may wear a different colour when viewed by a partial eye. The Danish descents upon the British and Irish coasts were in some degree regulated by the plunder which a few years of peace had from time to time accumulated in the hands of their victims, and the bands of cut-throat followers, on the other hand, who from time to time arrived at maturity, and who were regularly instilled with ideas of future plunder and renown among their brother pirates. "Tranquil occupations," writes a Danish historian of his countrymen, "did not enjoy any reputation among the Norsemen. In the spring, crowds of new-raised men fit to bear arms went from



HOWDEN MARKET-PLACE.

home, plundering coasts and lands wherever they made their appearance."[1]

Now, Ethelred seems not to have had the courage or energy to resist these attacks, and adopted the miserable expedient of buying the indulgence of his country's enemies, and so instituted the tax known as Dane-geld, or money to be given to the invader to secure immunity. Of course the religious houses were ready prey for him, because their lands and possessions were so very accessible; and among other forfeitures the collegiate establishment of Howden passed from Peterborough to the Crown, and was dissolved in the reign of Edward VI. We are left in singular ignorance of its history in the meantime, as few records seem to have been preserved; but we know that it was granted to the Bishops of Durham; and Walter Skirlaw one of them, has the credit of designing some of the best parts of the masonry. This same bishop had originally been at the charming palace of Wells, when he enjoyed the dignity of the Bath and Wells bishopric. How such beautiful residences as these—which, next to his own at Durham, are the most picturesque in England—

[1] Yet some old Danish histories speak of these pirates as brought up from early youth amidst songs that "chronicled the valiant deeds of their ancestors."

must have delighted so great an architect as he was! He built the central tower of York, which is singularly like Howden. One thing has been laid to the credit—or shall we say debit?—of this prelate that we may now fairly absolve him from. Yet Camden gives the tale currency; and Bishop Gibson, who edited his works, repeats it; and in a much more modern work the tale is told again. It was stated that in the low land between the Ouse and the Humber the country was subject to floods, and naturally more so in old times than at present, for the lands are now drained, and in consequence raised; but at any time the floods would hardly have risen above the doorsteps of the dwellings. Yet Skirlaw is said to have built the tower in order to allow the inhabitants to reach a safe shelter from the water when a flood like the one of old spread over the doomed land; and a grave historian points out that the tower would have held only a small number of the inhabitants, and that at a very unnecessary height, while a low building on piers would have sufficed, at the same cost, to have saved the whole population of Howden. One thing is certain, that Walter Skirlaw never intended the slight tower of Howden to accommodate the residents of the old town. In the year 1785 the chancel and chapter-house were cleared away of the rubbish that

had accumulated in them through the falling of the roof; and within a few inches of the original surface the workmen found human remains, wrapped up in fine linen and preserved in spices. There is every reason to believe that these had been deposited in their resting-place for nearly 500 years. The curious thing about Howden Church is that, although we know the time of its erection, we find the Perpendicular architecture prevailing when we should have expected to see Late Decorated; and I have often thought, from an examination of this and York, that Skirlaw must have been the very earliest innovator upon Decorated architecture. It just occurred to me, after remembering the quotation of Earl Worcester about the fox when he had made up his mind to fight Henry IV., that only some few miles away his residence lay; and even now the remains would indicate what its former grandeur had been; and it more than puzzles one to know why he should have left his security and fastnesses, to perish within an hour of his sentence, by the axe, when, as Shakespeare shows, he was not at all a venturesome man, and indeed rather inclined to tardiness and safety. He chided Hotspur's desire to fight when they were drawn up after their hot July march to Shrewsbury, though Hotspur was probably in the right as far as strategy was concerned—

The number of the king exceedeth ours!
For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in.

Wressel Castle was Lord Worcester's residence, and documents yet exist that attest its former splendour. A great part of it was built of squared stones brought from France. The list of servants—a list that was kept with the same regularity that we should look for in that of a railway company's employés now—is almost incredible. There were to be six gentlemen who waited before noon, ten yeomen and grooms of chambers, four yeoman officers, four groom officers, twenty servants to wait in great chamber, and so on through the weary list. In the year 1646 the Earl of Northumberland, the successor to the estates of his relative Earl Worcester, was a supporter of the Parliament; but he lost, it is said, £42,554 by damages through the civil war, in loss of rent and injuries to his woods and tenements—a sum that might now be considered to represent at least half a million of money.

CHAPTER V.

LEICESTER AND BOSWORTH FIELD.

Leicester, Hinckley, and Atherstone—King Richard III. and Henry IV. march to the field of Bosworth—Authorities of its history—Blue Boar Inn—Battle of Bosworth—Town of Market Bosworth—A breakfast at the Dixie Arms—End of Wars of Roses.

ONE generally regards Leicester as an ancient town that should be of great interest to the antiquary: and, indeed, there are Roman remains, and some old churches —which have been unhappily modernised by the "restorer"—sufficient to show its venerable antiquity. The streets are now, however, much changed, and those who may expect to find, from its age and its share in history, an old town like Chester or Shrewsbury, will be disappointed. There is some appearance of antiquity, it is true, in the scene shown here, called "Holy Bones," but Leicester town itself has less interest than many others in the country. The singular name "Holy Bones" is supposed to be derived from the ground

having been the burial-place of some ancient martyrs, and from time immemorial it has borne this name.

"HOLY BONES," LEICESTER.

Hinckley, the other town that is shown, has of course changed, and that even more than Leicester, but there

is enough of interest in either of them to tempt a visit. Hinckley was not a bed of roses, apparently, for Non-conformists in the year 1682. An old account of a meeting is preserved in the stupendous work on Leicestershire of Mr. Nicholls. The brethren had arranged for a meeting during the service at the parish church, and the chronicler says that "they nicked the time exactly to a minute;" but some elect heard of their intent, and communicated the outrage to the high constable, then at the orthodox service,—and he at once sallied out, and mustering such a force as he could, and enrolling on the side of order any he met with, they broke into the house where the Quakers were assembled, and arrested some of the most conspicuous offenders. Another account of the same scene says that a man in the garb of a Quaker knocked at the door of the house where the offenders were assembled, and obtained entrance, and then let in the constable and his men upon these breakers of the peace; and the account further says that they "were sorely vexed to be so nabbed, and used many coarse words at parting," but all the force joined in pursuit of the "tub-man" (this probably refers to a member who was reading from some extemporised stand), though he proved too fleet for them. The narrator, however, is exercised by

another grievance against them, and says, in measured language, that he wishes not to be mistaken, that one of the "whining auditory" went to a justice of the peace in the neighbourhood, and "had the impudence" to ask him to allow them to hold a meeting again, and "even quoted Scripture."

But Leicester, and Hinckley, and Atherstone, and many other towns in the neighbourhood, remind us of an event all-important in English history, and one that bears its fruits even to the present day.

The battle of Bosworth, it is hardly necessary to say, terminated the Wars of the Roses, and also was fatal to the line of Plantagenet. One or two pretenders did indeed appear, but they were of no avail or of much account. Lambert Simnel, the son of an Oxford tradesman, personated the Earl of Warwick, and his reminiscences will be impressed on those who are acquainted with the beautiful neighbourhood of Minster Lovell; but he was soon defeated; and, with a clemency that strikes one as very unusual in those times, he was reduced to the position of a scullion in Henry VII.'s household; but this was probably wise, as he was there for all people to see, and so prevent a future imposture. Another claimant was the celebrated Perkin Warbeck, whose adventures were even more

singular, and who succeeded in imposing on the King of Scotland, and France, and even persuaded the Dowager of Burgundy to acknowledge him as her nephew. But he was executed as a felon at Tyburn by the common hangman ; the Barons and feudalism were at once shattered, and never recovered. The Earl of Warwick (Kingmaker), however, was the embodiment of the Baronage in its power ; he could raise an army himself, and had personal retainers to the number of six hundred men when he went to Parliament ; so that the Wars of the Roses were indeed little else than the wars of Barons, for the Kings they supported were dependent on them more than on the people at large. The ferocity with which they were fought, and the rancorous hatred they left behind them after each battle, seem very singular now ; and, if it were not that we have seen wars in more recent times which we can hardly understand, the case would be a paradox. A great orator recently said : " Look back at the pages of history, and consider the feelings with which we now regard wars that our forefathers in their time supported with the most pernicious enthusiasm. Can you credit, for example, that the American war, now deemed foolish by nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand men in this country, was a war which for some

years was supported — which for some years was enthusiastically supported—by the mass of the people? And then see how powerful and deadly are the fascinations of passion and of pride." The Wars of the Roses, which terminated at Bosworth Field, must have retarded the progress of England for something like a century and a half. The power of the Barons—who, with all their failings, had served as a real safeguard against Royal encroachments on the liberties of the people—was then broken down. Much wealth had corrupted the religious houses, and the satirical, often even gross, carvings that we see in the parish churches of the period indicate but too clearly the nature of the lives that the monks had fallen into. Indeed, the slovenly masonry of the period would go far to prove that they cared more for creature comforts than for careful labour. The arches or the windows of a building of the Edwardian period will often be clear and sharp and perfect, when the additions of the later period of the Plantagenets, or more particularly of the Tudors, are sadly in want of repairs. But with the fall of the Barons and the hardly delayed fall of the monasteries, the Royal power became supreme, and the monarch ruled in a more absolute way than had ever been known before. The Tudors were even more arbitrary than the Stuarts, and carried

matters with a higher hand; only, they had ability, and surrounded themselves with able advisers instead of with court jesters; for all the Stuarts and all their Ministers could not have dissolved the monasteries, and this feat Henry and Cromwell were able to accomplish with a few strokes of the pen.

Hinckley is an old town in Leicestershire, on the Midland Railway. Now it is very much altered, and the description given by quaint old Burton would hardly apply to it. He says that it is a "good pleasant place," but he "cannot greatly commend the town," and this on account of its want of uniformity; indeed, the streets are singularly irregular; but unhappily the quaint old buildings that struck Burton as being so irregular have disappeared, and are replaced by modern ones of a not very picturesque type. The ancient parish church is of great dimensions, but it has been "restored" in modern times, and much of its interest, in consequence, is gone. There is a good contrivance for the disposal of the gravestones here. The churchyard is laid out in the terraces, with level walks and sloping banks, so that the tombstones, which lie sloping on the banks, can be read and examined without the necessity of treading on them. Hinckley was very celebrated in history even before the time when some of

the rival forces used it as their head-quarters on the road to Bosworth Field. It was conferred on a follower

HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE.

of William the Conqueror, who soon became nearly as powerful as the monarch himself, and enjoyed the title

of Lord High Steward. He built a great castle here, of which I believe no traces are left; he rebuilt the parish church which has been so sadly modernised; and he also laid out a park that extended some three miles to the east of the town. Now, of course, all this is enclosed land for farming purposes. History has done nothing to mitigate the judgment which the contemporaries of the third Richard passed upon him. There is no doubt of his ability as a military leader; but his cold-blooded murders would be far more than enough now to consign any man to his doom, without the faintest hope of mercy, or probably even without a petition being signed in his favour. That he could clear the way for his ambition by three deliberate assassinations of his nearest relatives gives us some idea of the state to which England had been reduced by the Wars of the Roses, for such an event to be even tolerated. Still, so great was the power of the Barons, that they continued for their own ends to maintain the struggle, and kept England engaged in a cruel civil war for thirty years—a war, indeed, that raged until the fighting part of the community was fairly exhausted. A hundred thousand able-bodied men are computed to have fallen, and that out of a population of little more than two and a quarter millions. Nor does this com-

putation include those that were left at home, and who often, in severe weather, must have been reduced to the utmost extremity, and even to starvation. Almshouses multiplied now, it is true, but they were quite inadequate; and though some of the vast wealth of the religious houses was expended in works of charity, there is but too much reason to fear that Falstaff's description of his regiment was generally a true one, however it may have applied to his gallant corps. "There is not three of my hundred and fifty left alive, and they are for the town's end to beg during life." The halt and the maimed used, indeed, to be the regular supporters to the city arms which were emblazoned on the entrance gates. Not only was Richard so steeped in wickedness, but he was a consummate hypocrite, and there can be no doubt that Shakespeare's character of him is the just one. Indeed, Shakespeare's ancestor, from whom he was the fourth in descent, fought at Bosworth, and had lands and tenements given to him in Warwick by Henry VII., as appears from Haylett; and the characters of Henry and Richard must have been discussed and re-discussed in the family a hundred times. The manœuvring of Richard to obtain possession of Edward's infant sons, and his pretended solicitude for their welfare, as we learn from history, is quite in keeping with

his mock concern for his brother Clarence, whom he saw taken to the Tower, and faithfully promised to have released,—which his power with Edward would probably have enabled him to do,—but he yet could hardly control his delight till Brackenbury disappeared with his prisoner. "Simple plain Clarence! I do love thee so, that I will shortly send thy soul to heaven." If we can forget the byways and crooked paths by which Richard "met his crown," of course there can be no doubt that his claim was much more legal than Henry's; but the nation was not with him, and during his brief reign he lived in constant fear of treachery and assassination.

Bosworth Field was fought on August 22, 1485 (old style), which would correspond with September 2 of our almanacs. Henry, Earl of Richmond, had been brought up in France, and long meditated trying conclusions for the English crown with Richard. He landed in Wales only three weeks before the battle, and went by Haverfordwest, Cardigan, and Welshpool, on to Shrewsbury. The house where he slept in that town is strong and perfect, though it has been converted into two small shops. An old author quoted by Phillips gives a curious anecdote of Richmond's entry into Shrewsbury. "Maister Myttoon made an-

swere" to Richmond's request to open the gates for their rightful king, "that he knew no king only King Richard, whose lyffetenants he and his fellows were." And he intimated, in the language of the period, that if he went into Shrewsbury at all it should be over his body. So Henry retired to a village called Forton for the night; but Mytton, being prevailed upon, opened the gates next day, and, to save his oath, lay down on the ground, and let Richmond walk over him. He made little stay at Shrewsbury, and encamped at Newport on the borders of Shropshire, where the Talbot's forces joined him. At Stafford, as he passed through, he had a private interview with Sir William Stanley, who was afraid for his brother Lord Stanley's son. In the 4th Act of Richard III., Lord Stanley tells the King that Richmond is on the seas, and when pressed admits that he thinks it must be that "he makes for England, here to claim a crown;" and Richard fiercely turns upon him—

> Where be thy tenants, and thy followers?
> Are they not now upon the Western shore,
> Safe conducting the rebels from their ships?—

and ends by ordering him to leave behind him his son, George Stanley, as he goes to muster his men; saying that, if he is not true to him, "his head's assurance is

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but frail." When Richmond arrived at Tamworth, he heard that Richard was at Leicester. "From Tamworth thither is but one day's march." It would only be a pleasant day's march for a pedestrian, but along Watling Street, which is the route he took, the distance is some thirty miles. Of course he was excited when he spoke to his men, for an army with baggage would hardly attempt such a feat. He set out before his army to Atherstone, which is nine miles distant, to meet the Stanleys, and old chroniclers say that Lord Stanley put on a show of flying before him to join his forces with King Richard, and this is extremely probable. Richmond slept at the inn called the "Three Tuns," which is still a respectable hostelry. The two Stanleys separated with their forces. Sir William took his way through Shanton, approaching the field from the west, while Lord Stanley occupied the other side of the field of battle: the result of this manœuvre will be shortly apparent. Richard had been living with his court at Nottingham for some time; it was a favourite residence with him, and very central. The view from the terrace at Nottingham Castle is wonderful, and the bluff precipitous hill on which the building is situated rendered it in those days impregnable. He marshalled his troops in the market-place, and then led them in perfect order to Leicester,

mounted, as the history of the county say, on a large white horse: "Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow." He wore his crown, Hutton supposes, as an heraldic emblem, but it is more probable that he thought to impress himself upon all adversaries by reminding them of his dignity—"Besides, the King's name is a tower of strength." He entered Leicester at night. And now I must trust to Mr. Hutton for the description of the march into Leicester, which is twenty-five miles distant. He wrote an account of the battle of Bosworth Field in 1807, but he had commenced his investigations of the scene in 1788. All this, indeed, was classic ground to him, and had from his early youth a fascination. Unfortunately, he does not always give his authorities; Buck, Rapin, Sir W. Fenn, and Burton, seem to have been among them, and I have endeavoured to compare them wherever practicable. The last-named author, who wrote a history of Leicester, is entitled to respect. He received a careful education at Oxford, and was himself a trained lawyer, and also was lord of the next manor to Bosworth. He says that he had seen those who saw the conflict, and "heard of their discourses, though related by the second hand." We find that he was born in 1575, or ninety years after the battle, so it is quite possible that what

he says is accurate, for he only "saw" these aged people, and they were but spectators. Indeed, an old man in his ninety-eighth year once gave me some interesting information regarding Cumnor Hall; he remembered it standing when he fished in the moat as a village boy: and Burton professes only to have seen the spectators. Now, as Shakespeare lived eleven years nearer the event, it makes his description even more valuable; and I am convinced that any one who will carefully read through the ancient chronicles will be strongly impressed with the belief that Shakespeare's dramatic sketch is the very best history left us of this decisive battle. But to return to Richard's march from Nottingham to Leicester. According to Hutton (a true witness, in all probability), his army, which consisted chiefly of foot, was in two divisions; and these were arranged in columns five abreast. After the first column came Richard on his white steed, and the baggage of the army; the King having the advantage of all the external attractions which his wardrobes and valets at Nottingham could afford him; and the second division, which was formed as the first, marched in column after. Mr. Hutton's mention of the cavalry is rather obscure. He says: "The horse, being divided, formed the wings and kept near the centre." Such a

cavalcade, he says, was calculated to strike awe, for it would be more than an hour in marching out of Nottingham, and the same time in marching into Leicester. Richard rested at the "Blue Boar Inn;" and as this is now pulled down, it is satisfactory to learn that it has left its name in an adjoining street "now corrupted into Blubber Lane." He left Leicester on the 17th, in the same state as he entered it, wearing the royal crown, and expected to meet Richmond at Hinckley. The night of the 17th was passed at Elmsthorpe, about three miles distant, where his officers slept in the church: which reminds the writer of a circumstance which he remembers in the lower St. Lawrence, at the old French village of La Val. A perfect crowd of mosquitoes had invaded the settlement, and as this was in July, the very worst month for them to appear, sleep in cottages was impossible, for though their humming is loud enough, they are not like King Henry's buzzing night-flies that hush you to your slumber. The coldness of the stone walls inside the building kept them away during the day, and at nightfall the villagers entered the chapel suddenly, chasing to death any that might be on the windows, and then slept securely in the pews during the whole period they stayed.

On the 18th Richard marched to Stapleton, and encamped at a place called the "Bradshaws," and there he remained till Sunday the 21st, when both armies came in sight of each other. For those who care to refer to a map of Leicestershire it may be said that Richard's army was drawn up in line before Sutton Cheynell, and Henry's before Shenton; but in a word they met in battle array on a marshy plain of uneven surface, the Bosworth Field shown here. In those days it was unenclosed and uncultivated, and contained about 1500 acres. Richard's army numbered, according to Shakespeare, some 20,000 men, and Henry's was about one-third the strength: and this agrees with the average numbers that are recorded by the chroniclers. The stone well that is figured lay between the armies, and, if we suppose the house and trees removed, the picture gives a fair idea of the battlefield. Richard's line greatly outflanked Henry's, but on his right hand was Sir Richard Stanley with his forces, and on his left Lord Stanley with his. Lord Stanley's tenantry amounted to 3000 men, it is said; and this was a considerable fraction of the Royal army, should he prove false to Richard. Lord Stanley was encamped, according to Hutton's map, some way from Richard's line of battle. Sir James Blunt, in reply to Richmond's question in Shakespeare, fully confirms this—

> Unless I have mista'en his colours much
> (Which well I am assured I have not done),
> His regiment lies half a mile at least
> South from the mighty power of the king.

And here, before speaking further of the battle, we may ask why so ruthless a tyrant as Richard spared Lord Stanley's son. It is quite beyond the scope of an article on Country Towns to go into the various histories, but there can be no doubt that the position chosen by Lord Stanley served him. Richard was quite prepared to carry out his threat, and had ordered the executioner to proceed, when Lord Ferrers, according to Hutton, remonstrated with the King, and ended his pleading by saying, "It can do your cause no service to take his life, and may do you a harm." Shakespeare makes Norfolk the preserver of the young Stanley, when he ordered his instant execution—

> My lord, the enemy has passed the marsh.
> After the battle let George Stanley die.

The marsh is the low swampy ground that extended along the hollow where Richard's Well is, and it lay between the armies. One is apt to believe that it must have been some interceder as powerful as Norfolk to induce Richard to arrest his arm in so congenial an undertaking. After a few flights of arrows, the contest

became hand to hand, as was customary in those days, and raged for an hour without any great advantage to either party, when it is recorded that Oxford closed up his ranks, and gave Richard's army a chance of outflanking him; and at that moment Stanley, who outflanked both, threw his men into Richmond's forces. Richard, shouting out, "Treason! treason!" called on his attendants to follow him where Henry was, and they almost cut their way to within a short distance of him, but not till the King fell, literally covered with wounds. His white horse was killed: Catesby had met him calling out—

> A horse, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!
> *Catesby.*—Withdraw, my lord, I'll help you to a horse.
> *K. Richard.*—Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,
> And I will stand the hazard of the die.
> I think there be six Richmonds in the field;
> Five have I slain to-day instead of him:
> A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

From the time when Richard galloped out of his ranks to the time when he fell can only have been some fifteen minutes, but how full of import they were to England! The house of the Plantagenets was extinguished, the Barons' power was reduced to a name, and the Church, then more wealthy and powerful than either, might have heard its own knell in the Leicester

chimes that rang in the coronation of the first of the Tudors. The crown was found near a hawthorn bush after the battle, and placed on Henry's head by Sir William Stanley; hence the crown in a bush on his monument at Westminster. A slope down to the spring—which rises, however, nearly to the level of the land—makes it a convenient drinking-place for cattle. There is a stone over the well with the following inscription. "Aqua ex hoc puteo hausta sitim sedavit, Ricardus tertius Rex Angliæ cum Henrico comite de Richmondia acerrime atque infensissime prælians, et vita pariter, ac sceptro, ante noctem cariturus ii. Kal. Sept. A.D. MCCCCLXXXV." The country people always used to say that the well ran water tinged with blood, and would not drink from it. But the truth is, as we often see in marshy lands, there is some tinge of a red-ochrous character in the soil, which colours the water. Yet this belief appears stated as a matter of fact in a history of England that is very extensively used in schools. Mr. Hutton says that old chroniclers have pointed out how the Tudors wished to cast ignominy on Richard's character and physical shortcomings, and dubbed the hill where he addressed his troops Dickon's Nook, and the well King Dick's Well. These names they bear to the present day. Indeed, when the writer

BOSWORTH FIELD AND KING RICHARD'S WELL.

ST. GEORGE HANOVER SQUARE

asked a rustic the way to Richard's Well, he corrected him politely enough by saying King *Dick's.* Some of the spoils that have been dug up, such as the steel parts of a crossbow and spurs, that are preserved in the Church at Bosworth and in the Liverpool Museum, are engraved in Hutton's work; and so beautiful is the design, that they would obtain prizes in any Exhibition in Europe. Burton mentions arrow-heads of great size and weight, but those I have seen are spear-heads. Spearmen seem to have played a considerable part in the strife. "Look that my staves be sound and not too heavy" are Richard's words on the night before the battle, as he went to his broken sleep. Sir Thomas More, who knew him well, says that he was "troubled with frightful dreams, and rather slumbered than slept,' and it was not unusual for him to start up and run about his chamber, so that the ghosts he sees in Shakespeare—"Let me lie heavy on thy soul to-morrow" —were only in keeping with his usual way of life. But the incidents and details of this interesting chapter in history are so numerous that a goodly book might be filled with them, and many which I had hoped to narrate must be omitted for want of space. From the battlefield to Bosworth is a distance of about three miles. We went there early on a fine September

morning, and returned to the "Dixie Arms," an excellent country inn. In this instance the hostelry is resorted to every week on corn-market days by wealthy farmers, or at any rate by the class of farmers who used to be wealthy; and, as there is a demand for good accommodation, be sure it is not long in forthcoming. Indeed, I hope it will not be necessary to apologise if, in pursuance of my plan, I say that only one more instance is afforded of the aptitude of Englishmen to manage an inn if only customers will give them a chance. We had fairly good black tea, a dish of unmistakable Leicester chops excellently well broiled, the freshest of eggs and of butter, and watercress, all in a comfortable parlour, for the sum of one shilling and ninepence each, though there were only two of us; and it would be very interesting to hear what those who continually praise a Paris breakfast would say to this. Let them bring a similar bill of fare, served in a private room, and say honestly what they paid, even granting, at the expense of probability and of the Leicestershire farmers, that they would have chops of an equal quality.

The road from Bosworth to the battlefield skirts Bosworth parish, and is very beautiful. It is quite probable that the traveller may not meet a rustic

ENTRANCE INTO MARKET BOSWORTH, ON THE ROAD FROM THE BATTLEFIELD.

HANOVER COLLEGE

between the market town and Sutton, a distance of two miles. The view given opposite of the entrance into Market Bosworth is characteristic of the whole road, and many a scene there is that Gainsborough would have gloried in. That Bosworth has more attractions and fascinations for Englishmen than any of the other twelve cruel battles of the Roses may be due to the fact that it closed the struggle, and ended in the death of a King whose name has for centuries been a byword for cruelty; and perhaps, though we do not recognise it now so fully, there were those who had arrived at manhood when the battle of St. Albans was fought, and who were only in the prime of life when all the hurly-burly was done, who could count the loss of their countrymen at Bosworth as being much less than half that of the least of the thirteen battles of the rival houses.

CHAPTER VI.

MELBOURNE, BURTON, ETC.

Melbourne—Lord Melbourne and Melbourne Hall—Melbourne Church—Melton Mowbray—Stilton cheese and Melton Mowbray pies—"Orator" Henley—Burton—Lazars Abbey—Croxton Abbey—"Bell" at Melton—Melton Hunt—Field sports.

A FEW miles to the south of Derby lies the quaint old town of Melbourne. It does not appear to have many visitors, and indeed the hotel accommodation would not seem to point it out as any great centre of attraction. Yet it is not only beautiful, but full of historical associations. From Melbourne the prosperous city in Australia takes its name, and from it the amiable, scholarly Minister who filled so conspicuous a place in the political arena of the first half of the present century derived his title. Within a few hundred paces of the church, here shown, is Melbourne Hall; and though Lord Melbourne had other estates, this was for long his favourite one, and the quiet secluded mansion has,

perhaps, occupied a fair share of importance in English history. Lord Melbourne was the philosopher and friend to the present occupant of the throne, and if, indeed, as has been said from a quarter that cannot be gainsaid, also the guide, it must be admitted that no surer or safer guide could have been found. He was intended for a profession, and studied at Eton and Cambridge; but his elder brother, Mr. Peniston Lamb, died, and left him the unexpected heir to large estates. In Melbourne he used to live at times, though Brockett, in Herts, a much more imposing residence, was his principal abode; but the almost evergreen Dutch gardens, the quiet river, and the water-mill at Melbourne were more attractive to him, and probably Brockett was only preferred because it placed him nearer to his duties.

MELTON MOWBRAY.

Lord Melbourne hardly occupies the place in history yet that is his due. We often hear of his negligent ways in the society he mixed with, and of manners that might betoken indolence; but there were few more painstaking men in England. He always strove to rise above party and to act an honest course, and gained the admiration of Fox and Brougham. Indeed, he and Canning and Huskisson were very generally in concert; and when he was in power with Lord Grey, he passed a great number of useful, statesmanlike measures, that bear their fruits even to the present day. During his term of office, slavery was abolished, as was also the commercial monopoly of the East India Company. In 1834 the growing evils of pauperism were kept in check by the new Poor-law which Dickens attacked in "Oliver Twist;" and, as Dr. Green has said in his "History of the English People," the Municipal Corporation Act restored to the inhabitants of towns the rights of self-government of which they had been deprived since the fourteenth century. The surroundings of Melbourne Hall are exceedingly pleasant, and just such as might have delighted its owner. There is by the church a thoroughly rustic water-mill, which it would be a vandalism to disturb; and though from the village, whence the back of the Hall is seen, the house only appears

MELBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE.

HANOVER

like a huge pile of farm buildings, a walk to the front will show a perfect example of the Dutch mansion that prevailed in the reign of the third William, with the trim beds, and a park beyond.

The church at Melbourne is very grand, perhaps it is one of the finest Norman parish churches in England ; and though money has been laid out on its restoration, fortunately this has not been on a sufficiently extensive scale to interfere with its original interest. There is a double triforium, as there is at St. John's, Chester, Waltham, Durham, and other buildings ; but this at Melbourne is especially grand and imposing, and the work is in perfect preservation. In some respects it bears a resemblance to the early masonry we find in the northern parts of France. Melbourne and many large estates were granted to the earldom of Lancaster, and remained for centuries in the family. Among these was Wichnor Manor, that was granted to Sir P. de Somerville under penalties and forfeitures that probably were not onerous. He was required to present a flitch of the finest bacon to any married couple who, after having been married for a year and a day, were prepared to come forward and say on oath that they had never on a single occasion quarrelled. One is almost reminded of the good old divine Paley, when he was

shown an aged couple that had been married for forty years without a single word of difference, and he came to the conclusion, after observing them for some time, that they "must have found it very slow." Of course the Dunmow tenure of the celebrated flitch is another instance of a similar provision. The statistics of the population of Melbourne between the years 1861 and 1871 show a remarkable sameness. Excepting where some industry has sprung up, we should hardly look for much change in the number of the inhabitants in the Derby towns, and we find, in the decade mentioned, that often two per cent is quite sufficient to cover the increase or decrease; but in Melbourne the census that was taken in 1861 showed 4694 inhabitants, and in 1871 4693, or a decrease on the total number of one resident in ten years.

Melton Mowbray will be known to every Englishman for some one or other of the specialities that have made it famous—Stilton cheese (for Melton is one of the principal markets), pork pies, and hunting. The oldest and largest pork-pie establishment is that of Mr. Evans, and he very obligingly showed it to me in full working order. With machinery such as he has, a large number of pies could be turned out in a few hours by a few hands, but he employs twenty-seven cooks, on an

average, all the year round. Everything is on a wholesale scale, and the vats of pepper and the sacks of flour would quite astonish even a prosperous grocer. He uses only legs of pork; and these are hung up, like stalactites in a vast cavern, during the winter season, when his principal trade is done. There seems to be no particular reason why Melton Mowbray should excel in pork pies over every other town in England, and probably there is nothing either in the atmosphere or surroundings to account for its pre-eminence, for pork is brought from Lancashire, Yorkshire, Surrey, and indeed everywhere, and flour and pepper come from either Liverpool or London; but, for all that, its supremacy is never questioned. In the same way Ormskirk,

MELTON MOWBRAY, APPROACHING FROM LEICESTER.

in Lancashire, for gingerbread, and Everton, near Liverpool, for toffy, hold undisturbed sway in the markets of the world. The church at Melton Mowbray is very noble, and quite an example of the fine old parish churches of England. It has suffered a little from the restorer, but enough of the ancient fabric remains to show what its old condition must have been at the beginning of the present century. It has been proposed on very high authority indeed to have a list prepared of the various churches of ancient date which have not been "restored," as the Goths and Vandals are so fond of calling their costly and sacrilegious destruction of ancient ecclesiastical buildings. This subject has been referred to before, and now again it is brought up, in the endeavour to arrive at some principle on which church restoration, or rather repairs, should be conducted. It may be taken as a canon that admits of no qualification that no old stone should be rubbed down so as to show a new surface; the lichens and the mould of time cannot be restored. If an art education were more common among architects, these records of the past would soon be valued as they should be. With silicates and good mortar, or sometimes cement, and a careful hand, wonderful repairs are possible; and though skill and science have been at

work, it should be hardly possible to tell that the church or castle has been touched. I happened to meet with some excellent remarks upon this subject by Mr. John-

BRIDGE ON THE WREAK, MELTON MOWBRAY.

son, an architect practising at Melton Mowbray, to whom were entrusted the repairs of the ancient village cross of Frisby on the Wreak. Speaking of Waltham Cross, he said that "an attempt at its renovation rather

than restoration caused much discussion ; the plea being that, however faithfully the old work might be copied, it does at best but show how well we can imitate the original, and affords very equivocal evidence of the state of the arts in the reign of Edward I. ; and this argument will bear out in all matters of restoration. In the present day we are too apt to lose sight of the ancient work, and by the introduction of novelties to entirely destroy the character of the original. There is a charm about the moss-covered stones that is not appreciated by all architects ; but the object should be, not to renew them by putting a fresh stone in the place of every old one that is in any degree mutilated, but to preserve them from further dilapidation, and to save every ancient feature that can possibly be preserved ; restoring such parts only when it is indispensably necessary to ensure the safety and durability of the structure." This is so well said, and so thoroughly covers the ground that is taken, as to render further remarks on the same subject unnecessary. How far such a system has been departed from, let the meretricious parish churches that have met with such hard usage in every county in England testify. There are indeed not very many that, under the name of "restoration," have not met with some damage, if not even destruction. I saw

a short time ago a fine old church of the thirteenth century, formerly an abbey church. It was many years since I had seen it before—and then it had not been restored ; as the red sandstone out of which it was built had rather crumbled away in parts, some steps were imperatively necessary for its protection. How far the architect may have overdone his work it is not necessary here to inquire, especially as the dark tint of the new stone did not jar with the old ; but one circumstance certainly jarred the feelings of any antiquary. There was a large oak screen of the earliest part of the eighteenth century, say about a century and three-quarters old, and this was elaborately carved in the style that Wren would have adopted, though it had nothing perhaps very like the work of that incomparable master. Still, it was characteristic, and it was richly toned by the best of all colourists—Time. This was taken down and removed to some outbuilding, though it was so firm that it held together intact, and the spirited rector proposed to ask for a faculty to sell it to any one, and had ordered a new screen in its place, in the interminable fourteenth-century-revival style. Another instance will explain the desolation that these church-restorers are making in our venerable treasures. A new rector or vicar is appointed to his charge, and,

as in one notable instance I remember, this new incumbent remarked some very fine fourteenth-century bases partially enclosed in black oak pews of the year 1695. He thoroughly believed he was the discoverer, and had the venerable pews swept away, and the bases entirely rechiselled and "restored," and exposed through narrow lifeless open benches. Surely the architecture of the time of William of Orange, or Marlborough, and indeed of the rise and fall of the first Napoleon, has associations enough! We could say to any of the deceased architects with almost the same truth as the poet when he addressed the mummy at the British Museum :—

> Since first thy form was in this box extended,
> We have above ground seen some strange mutations.
> The Roman empire has begun and ended.
> New worlds have risen, we have lost old nations,
> And countless kings have into dust been humbled.

At Melton Mowbray a very interesting discovery was made a few years ago. On the high ground on one side of the town some workmen found a number of beads of different sizes and materials, and the remains of one or two ancient knives; they also came across ancient pottery, and some of the specimens were perfect; but they were not the kind of pitchers that they lusted after, and only when some *savants* from a

distance came did they learn their value—but the best examples had been broken. They found, however, some human skeletons, and these were pronounced, on sufficiently clear grounds to satisfy the experts, to have belonged to the Saxon period. The very greatest care was taken to preserve them, and one remarkably fine skeleton indicated a frame of great strength and stature, and showed also a nobly-developed skull. It is said there were no coffins found, and the bodies were all laid in regular rows from east to west, a few feet apart, the head being invariably towards the west; and from this it was inferred that the Saxons were usually interred without coffins; but in a Cottonian MS. of that period is an illustration of the raising of Lazarus, and he certainly is in a very elaborate coffin, though in the Bayeux Tapestry there is a cartoon representing the burial of Edward the Confessor, and he is without one. The church of Melton Mowbray, as will be seen by the tower, is a very noble building, and perhaps is hardly excelled in Leicestershire. Many of its ancient features have escaped destruction from the restorer, and in the early part of the century it must have been indeed a noble pile. In this town John Henley was born. He was commonly known as "Orator Henley," and was a

talented but very eccentric divine. He it was who introduced action into the pulpit, in place of reading the sermon in the manner of a homily. Henley's father was the vicar of Melton Mowbray, and he sent his son to the free grammar school at Oakham, a richly endowed school founded in the time of Elizabeth, and attached to a hospital for the relief of the necessitous poor. This is about ten miles from Oakham, and the road is very beautiful. From Oakham he went to St. John's College, Cambridge, and on returning to his native town he received the appointment of head-master to Melton school, and by his energy, and perhaps to some extent his eccentric ways, he raised it to a prosperous condition from a very languishing one. But Melton was not a field sufficiently large for his genius, and he emigrated to the metropolis, where he thought that his gifts of preaching would have secured for him preferment; in this, however, he was disappointed, and he consoled himself by discussing political subjects every Wednesday at his Oratory, for which a shilling admission was charged. The tickets were medals, and bore the stamp of a rising star. On the top was "Ad summa," and below, "Inveniam viam aut faciam." In his Wednesday's harangues he inveighed very strongly against nearly all departments

of the Government and all rulers in general, which so delighted Pope that he gave him an honourable place in his "Dunciad;" he is "the Zany of our age;" and through this poem he is better known to the general reader than in any other way. He was rather ingenious in his devices to fill his temple, and on one occasion, when he desired to address an audience of shoemakers, he advertised that he would show a perfectly new way to make a pair of shoes in only a few minutes. The building was filled with Crispins at an early hour, and he duly appeared with a pair of long boots. These he made into shoes by simply cutting off the tops.

William de Melton, Chancellor to Edward III., and Archbishop of York, was born at Melton Mowbray, and his name often occurs in the annals of English history. Another very great man was a native of these parts, though his greatness lay in a somewhat different direction; and that was Daniel Lambert. We seem to have a hazy idea of this Leicestershire giant now, but if we consider his actual size we shall almost cease to wonder that his traditions are yet handed down with awe; for example, a man six feet high in good health, if of proper proportions and not reduced by training, might weigh some thirteen stone, but Lambert weighed fifty-three, or rather more than four men of

above the average size and weight. Two miles to the south of Melton is Burton Lazars, where there are mineral springs of great virtue; formerly they were in such repute that a hospital for lepers was built close to them, and it was in its day the most celebrated establishment of the kind in England. It is said that this place was built by a general contribution throughout the kingdom. Now the buildings and all trace of them have perished. But a much more interesting place in the same direction is the small village of Withcote, on the borders of Leicestershire and Rutland. This is the place where the genuine Stilton cheese was first manufactured, and where it still continues to be largely made. The name of "Stilton" is derived from the circumstance that it was at Stilton, in Huntingdonshire, that the cheeses were first sold. The market was at the "Bell Inn," situated on the old Roman Ermine Street, and before railways were introduced into these parts the ancient country town was of much greater importance than it is at present.

To the north-east of Melton Mowbray the country is perfectly delightful. The wolds are undulating hills of great beauty, and they contain some very noble specimens of forest-trees. In this district was the Abbey of Croxton, a wealthy house of the Præmon-

stratensian order. A sad calamity is recorded of it in the time of Edward III. It was nearly consumed by fire, and directly afterwards a plague of frightful malignity visited it. So violently did this rage, that literally all the canons were swept off, and the abbot and prior were left alone. I find in Dugdale's "Monasticon" that this is considerately alluded to in a letter from the king, Edward III. He spoke, as was his wont, of the evil days the Abbey had met with, in a kind, compassionate way, and alluded to the age of the abbot, the ravages of the fire, and after the fire the pestilence, and said that, with such disorders the tithe that was always paid to the Crown would be cancelled for that year. Croxton Abbey is close to Belvoir, the noble seat of the Rutlands, and has been converted into a residence for the Rutland family. It was granted with its vast possessions to the Earl of Rutland, on the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII., and has of course remained in the family ever since.

After a delightful ramble, we returned to Melton, to our quarters at the "Bell." Now, it is very probable that any resident of these parts will think that only the commonest and best known things are spoken of; but if he will consider again, he will remember that Englishmen know very little indeed of their own country. If

our friend came to Chester, where this is written, he might discover a hundred things that, though new to him, were very familiar to old residents ; though, indeed, the writer can answer for it that there are some of these latter who would rejoice to hear the remarks of a new visitor. Well, we arrived at the "Bell," and had left everything to our host, who proved equal to the occasion. Little did he think that his innkeeping would be chronicled. It would have been rather like taking an undue advantage of the reader to have invited the landlord aside (or the landlady) and explained that exceptional pains were to be taken with this particular dinner, because it is only things as they are that it is wished to describe. One might, in anticipation of a very extraordinary effort, have tempted the provider by quoting Milton—

> He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
> That call fame on such gentle deeds as these,
> And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
> Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.

But we simply left an order for the dinner they might be expected to provide for such wayfarers as they might judge us to be. There were cod-fish steaks nicely browned, and served with an excellent sauce that seemed to be simply made of the bone which was

extracted from the fish, boiled down with the head and tail, flavoured with anchovy, and thickened with a little arrowroot; this was succeeded by a leg of young pork stuffed and roasted to the minute. Two shillings and sixpence each was the moderate charge, and a jug of mild ale with a bottle of lemonade in it only increased the score by ninepence. As for the wine bill, it differed but little from the one already spoken of at Ashby: and here it seems peculiarly apt to say one word about the charges for wine in hotels. Some old-fashioned houses give the British public no credit for discernment, and think that, unless "you charge the price," customers will fail to appreciate the excellence of the beverage. A very consoling doctrine, I must say, to an enterprising landlord, as he balances in his mind what it would be safe to charge; but as a matter of fact, the travelling public have now a very fair idea of what wine is, and what it should be, and also of its value; and if they pay their account, and look pleasant, it is by no means to be inferred that they will come again. I am almost reminded of an hotel in Oxford I once stayed at, where the waiters were seemingly idle, and one of them, with whom I entered into conversation, said things had changed, and he supposed the authorities had stopped students from dining out unless with friends, and that

they were enforcing the regulations now much more strictly, etc. etc. But as against this I might urge that the account I received when I left was hardly a tempting example of the score one would desire to see. Two plates of filbert nuts for myself and friend were charged two shillings, and a bottle of claret—in behalf of which, as against my friend's verdict, I will plead that it was sound—was debited against us at six shillings. Now, here there is a very obvious disregard of the requirements of the present day. The hotel I speak of is probably familiar to all my readers, and it has a demure, quiet, old-fashioned look, and should make a very large fortune; but the thin claret at six shillings, though served up well, and at its very best, was only the light wine that costs about half a franc a bottle in Bordeaux. The secret of success in business is doubtless a large custom, at a properly remunerative price; but if the eighteenpence and the two shillings and sixpence per bottle at which we all know good wines can be purchased are trebled and quadrupled in the bill, the trade can hardly be expected to flourish on the sale of these luxuries. Doubling is ample.

Of course the grand attraction of Melton is the "Hunt," and this would require a chapter in itself to do it justice. The town, as one may say, bristles over

with hunting-boxes, made out of cottages or shops. A degree of comfort and privacy is given to them by rearrangement, and they have a quaint and generally pleasant appearance. Behind these are stables quite out of proportion to the dwelling-house, and indicating the affluence of the proprietors. In the hunting season, as soon as one wakens in the morning, are heard the pattering of many horses' feet as the grooms lead them out for exercise. From five to nine horses is the average number in the possession of each frequenter of this place, though there are some who own very many more than this. It may be generally taken for granted that those who frequent Melton for the hunting are actually drawn there by the love of the sport, and not to show off top-boots and a red coat. Tastes differ very much even among sportsmen ; and, as a matter of fact, many a keen gunner, even though he possesses all the opportunities for indulging in a race after the hounds, cares but little for that excitement, and feels as foreign to its attractions as Horace did in regard to those whose delight it was to raise the clouds of Olympic dust from the wheels of their chariots. But even in sports taste changes ; and we might not be far wrong if we looked upon the chase of the wild boar and deer of our ancestors as living in the meets at Melton

Mowbray, just as the billiard-table of modern houses is a refinement upon the ancient shuffleboard.

The sport of hawking, that met with such enthusiastic admirers in old times, would fail now to draw any list of ardent devotees; it would be more the diversion of a naturalist in a summer holiday. The Italians can rouse themselves into a state of fervour upon the issues of a game that merely consists in suddenly showing their fingers and requiring the party to whom they are shown to state the numbers of the ones that are not doubled up; yet the game of "Mora," as it is called, is so all-absorbing, that some disputed point leads at times to fatal results. There are bas-reliefs, we are told, in Italy which show certainly that "Mora" was played at the siege of Syracuse; and they say there are representations of Ajax playing the game with Ulysses, with indications from the tableaux that victory lay with the latter—on whom, indeed, it is not improbable that any member of the Melton Hunt would have risked an uneven sum of money in a game requiring such watchfulness and craft. The national game of cricket, again, would never take root in France. Frenchmen say at once they do not understand it, and they do not wish to. One ingenious stranger, indeed, from across the Channel, is said to have gone back to his native country

thoroughly impressed with the advantages that would accrue from introducing it into France for the more refractory of the Communist convicts. But one thing is certain: field sports, whatever they may be, are the life and soul of Englishmen, and tend enormously to improve their *physique* and health, and even to strengthen the limbs of those who are the descendants of Nimrods, even though they themselves may never have followed the chase; as Horace aptly says—

> Est in juvencis, est in equis, patrum virtus,
> Nec imbelles progenerant aquilæ columbas.

CHAPTER VII.

WHITTLESEA, CROYLAND, AND THE MARSHES.

Whittlesea — Dutch Settlers — System of Drainage — Bedford Level — Popham's Eau—Sir Cornelius Vermuyden—Croyland Abbey—Transformations of the surface of the marsh lands, and the formation of marshes in England and America—Guthlac of Croyland and his difficulties—Wild ducks — Return to Peterborough — Breakfast there — Wisbeach—King's Lynn—Lincoln.

It has often been observed that the inhabitants of mountainous countries are conspicuous for the love of their homes and their native land. Born in a sheltered valley, where all the scenes are beautiful, they have been accustomed from early youth, often almost from infancy, to look up at the peaks and hill-tops above, and in their fancy compare their outlines with familiar objects. In such places legends abound, and many are the weird stories of giants, and ghosts, and witches; in such places, also, the writers of romance always love to lay their scenes.

But there is also a charm in the low marsh lands

that binds the inhabitants to them, and makes them quite as patriotic and as much attached to their native fens. Nearly every acre has been won by the labour of their own hands, and they spend their lives, and are content to spend them, in compelling the thorns and briers

WHITTLESEA.

to give way, however slowly, to the fir-tree and myrtle. Rogers has finely described the Dutch republics, when speaking of the fall of Venice: "There was in my time another republic, also a place of refuge for the unfortunate—and not only at its birth, but to the last hour

of its existence—which had established itself in like manner among the waters, and which shared the same fate; a republic, the citizens of which, if not more enterprising, were far more virtuous, and could say to the great nations of the world,—Your countries were acquired by conquest or by inheritance, but ours is the work of our own hands; we renew it day by day, and but for us it might cease to be to-morrow—a republic in its progress for ever warred on by the elements, and how often by men more cruel than they!—yet constantly cultivating the arts of peace; and, short as was the course allotted to it (only three times the life of man, according to the Psalmist), producing, amidst all its difficulties, not only the greatest seamen, but the greatest lawyers, the greatest physicians, the most accomplished scholars, the most skilful painters, and statesmen as wise as they were just." Much of the fen land was drained by Hollanders, whom Sir Cornelius Vermuyden brought over with him to assist in the great work. Many words of Dutch origin are still used in the fen districts; and in the market-places, when the country-people come in with their produce, we see a great number of faces that bear strong witness to their Dutch forefathers. Yet, when they first landed, they were not by any means popular among the

original inhabitants, and one is surprised to learn that even Cromwell himself was found among those who regarded the strangers with prejudice.

It is, perhaps, not very easy to explain the system or systems of drainage that reclaimed the marsh lands of Huntingdon, Cambridge, Northampton, and Bedford. But, in a few words, the following outline, free from technical terms, may be accepted as approaching a slight history. There was at one time in the east of England a vast marsh, or sometimes it might properly be called an inland sea, that covered a district of about two thousand square miles. It extended, according to an old map of Dugdale's, from Newmarket almost to King's Lynn, and from Peterborough away into the low lands of Norfolk and Suffolk. This dismal swamp had existed from remote times, and the embankments which the Romans built along the coast-line to keep out the sea-water to some extent, rather increased the evil than remedied it; for the water was kept back from its outlet into the sea, though of course they had begun to provide for this, and Roman dykes are yet traceable in some parts of the vast expanse. Almost all the rainfall of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Nottingham found its way, through the Ouse, or Nene, or Trent, into the swampy lake; and we yet see

abandoned channels of rivers which had deposited their silt into such deep beds that their old course was choked, and a new outlet was forced through the soft yielding marsh land. Often in American rivers we see the same now. Some of the streams that join the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence have deposited silt until they have overflowed their banks in very rainy weather, and gradually formed marshes of uncertain extent; through these marshes the river flows in constantly changing channels, or else is lost in the broad swampy lakes that are so characteristic of the American continent.

Now, if we can imagine a dreary waste of two thousand miles, with here and there perhaps a slight sandy elevation, on which the fen-land population had found a rest for the sole of their foot; if we can imagine these now fertile lands almost without roads, and the inhabitants going in boats or canoes from house to house, we shall be able to understand the nature of the country that had to be dealt with in the time of the Stuarts.

The formation of the great Bedford Level, as the fen district is called, is very easily understood. A ridge of oolite hills bounds it on the west, and from this range the six rivers of the Level descend into the low countries

—the Ouse, the Cam, the Nen or Nene, the Welland, the Glen, and the Witham. The land gradually slopes towards the east, and the rivers bring with them their freight of sediment, which plays so conspicuous a part in geological formations and in enriching meadows. This *débris* is caused, of course, by the wearing away of the rocks and soils through which, in its wanderings, the stream passes before it reaches the sea. But the mouth of the river is the part which receives the greatest accumulation; for here the salt and fresh waters meet, and the temporary stagnation allows a better chance for depositing whatever is held in suspension. Another element here comes into play. The waters of the ocean contain countless millions of microscopic animalculæ, and when these are brought into contact with fresh water they die immediately; and, falling to the bottom, they add their tiny bodies to the accumulating silt. The rivers when in flood find barriers of their own making, and overflow the low lands that lie nearest their course. And so, in the lapse of time, shallow lakes, without an outlet, are covered with a native growth of rushes and reeds; and, as drainage raises the surface of a country, so saturating with water lowers its level, and the marsh sinks. In the same way a sponge that is full of water gains in

bulk when the water is removed. There is a singular illustration of this from the circumstance that it was at one time a practice in the fens in very dry seasons to let the water back again into the courses, and so irrigate the roots of the parched-up crops; and, exceptionable as such a system was, it had, occasionally, beneficial results. But the cause of the parching of the soil was that it was drained too little, and not too much; for the July sun baked the surface, and rendered it almost impervious to dew or moisture, when the latter was only sparingly supplied. And now we know that if we remove water to the depth of three feet by drains, the land suffers much less from drought. Not only does its more spongy nature collect all that can be caught, but the long tap-roots of the growing crops penetrate far below the surface, and find their supply of moisture. In root crops this is so conspicuously the case, that the very largest and best are looked for always now after the driest summers.

The early history of the draining operations shows that the engineers of the day were not skilful, and their undertakings, as they were called, met with continual disaster and disappointment. Indeed, the English were backward in all skilled labour as compared with their Continental neighbours. "We relied very much on

foreigners," says Mr. Smiles, "for our harbour engineering. Thus, when a new haven was required at Yarmouth, Joas Johnsen, the Dutchman, was employed on the banks of the Wytham at Boston; Matthew Hakes was sent from Gravelines, in Flanders, to repair it, and he brought with him, not only the mechanics, but the manufactured iron required for the work; and when an engine was needed to pump water from the Thames for the supply of London, Peter Morice, the Dutchman, brought one from Holland, together with the necessary workmen." King James I., when he heard of the inundations that afflicted the fen countries in the early part of his reign, declared that, for the honour of his kingdom, he would not let so large a district lie at the mercy of the waters, "and if no other would undertake the charge of clearing them, he would himself be the undertaker." The choice of Chief Justice Popham was hardly a happy one; but he sent him and a company of Londoners to undertake the works, and their labours are to be traced still in "Popham's Eau," and the "Londoners' Lode." But want of scientific knowledge marked their operations, and it was soon evident that they were not to be crowned with success; and then James was induced to employ Sir Cornelius Vermuyden, with his Dutch workmen, to carry out the

work which had failed. At a somewhat later period the efficiency of our Dutch neighbours was recognised in a manner they would hardly have desired; for when Blake defeated the great Van Tromp, many prisoners were taken, and five hundred were sent to labour on the drainage works of the Bedford Level, where their skill proved to be of great service; and they stayed upon the district we are describing for two years, when peace enabled them to return home; and after the battle of Dunbar, when so many of Leslie's army were taken prisoners by Cromwell, numbers were sent down and employed on the Bedford Level, where they afterwards settled. A singular entry appears in an order made at a Council of State: "Ordered that the Scots that are not yet provided with clothes be forthwith provided for here, according as the Scotch prisoners were, and at the same rates." One seems to think that they would have had a poor chance, without such a merciful act, of resisting the malaria of the low lands. It has been said that a want of skill, or engineering knowledge, was observable in the efforts of the first "undertakers," as they were called, and that is principally because they only drained locally, and did not provide for a final discharge of the waters; so that, indeed, a local drainage generally sent the surplusage

into an adjoining marsh. One is reminded of an ingenious American who banished rats from his premises by sprinkling caustic potass in the neighbourhood of their holes, which were quite cavernous, and when the ground burnt their feet they left him. "But," the writer asked, "what becomes of them?" "That," he said, "I cannot tell you; but I fancy my neighbours could give you some further information about them." Well; Vermuyden has often been blamed for his want of skill, though it was really the want of money that prevented this excellent engineer from carrying out his designs. It is not difficult to understand that, with land formed as the great Bedford Level was, its surface actually lay above the sea, into which the rivers sluggishly, and through very devious courses, emptied their waters; and Vermuyden at once pointed out that the principal object to be gained was to deepen the channels of the rivers and secure a final outlet. Of course, when the circumstance is taken into consideration that the swamp was above the ocean level, all the rest seems easy, and very far different from the fight against the storms he had left in Holland. There the land actually lay below the ocean level, and the storms of the North Sea had to be staved off by embankments that were the work of men's hands. Old Dutch

pictures show us the inhabitants sometimes crowding upon these, watching the tempest, and uncertain if it would be safe to return to their dwellings; and indeed the list of floods through broken embankments is a very terrible one, nor, it is to be feared, is it yet quite complete. The windmill and the steam-engine, in later times, have been the salvation of the Dutch, while on our side of the Channel the height of the marsh lands has served us in better stead. One seems almost to fancy that when the monks settled on the Islands, as the rising lands of the district are called, a better system of drainage was, at least for a time, inaugurated, or else they would never have been able to prosper. There is the beautiful Abbey of Croyland, that even now is a delight to a stranger, and in this the monks lived, from all accounts, in luxury for many centuries.

The triple bridge here shown is a perfect curiosity. It must have spanned over some half-stagnant water-courses in its time, or perhaps running brooks, but now it stretches its three limbs over a dry road. A fabulous antiquity has been assigned to it, but a very superficial examination of the mouldings will show that it cannot date its pedigree further back than the beginning of the thirteenth century. One thing is very certain, that the monks of Croyland, who built it and the grand Abbey,

had plenty of fertile land at their disposal, and that induces one to suppose that, after the dissolution of the monasteries, the fen lands began to deteriorate in value; indeed, Dugdale expressly says that Croyland Abbey

TRIPLE BRIDGE, CROYLAND.

was a perfect paradise, and in its spacious grounds and gardens the best of fruits were to be found. A writer has said that "among the places one often hears of, but few ever see, may be reckoned Croyland, or Crowland,

in Lincolnshire, famous for its Abbey. It lies in the very heart of the fens ; and the traveller whom business or accident takes there for the first time, say from Spalding or Market Deeping, will not soon forget either the way by which he reaches it or the place when reached." Of course it will be seen that the account was written before there was any station there on the Great Northern Railway. "For miles the road extends through a dead flat, where endless drains, occasional large sheets of water, pollard willows, and, if he be fortunate, a flight of wild ducks, are the only objects that meet his gaze. Not a habitation or a human being anywhere appears.

"The road itself, often raised to a considerable height, causes him many a twinge of fear as to the consequences of his horse starting at any sudden occurrence and dropping the vehicle over the unprotected edge ; and if another vehicle meets him in such places, he must have confidence indeed in the animal if he does not get out and, carefully holding him by the head, lead him to within a very few inches of the edge, and there keep him while the other vehicle passes. But the town is reached, and the superb ruins of the monastery at once attract the eye, and suggest all sorts of pleasant anticipations as to the place itself. Curiously, we are disappointed. Never surely before were there so many dull

and spiritless-looking houses congregated together. The drains that run over the streets seem to have shed their stagnant quality over everything. Not a good-looking public building of any sort relieves the tedium of brick-and-mortar; nay, we question if there is such a thing as a public building in the place. A handsome-looking or superior mansion is almost equally scarce. Strange as the fact may appear, we were informed that there was not a single person resident in Crowland that could be supposed even to aspire to the rank of a country gentleman." It is impossible to endeavour for long to trace out the history of these interesting regions without coming across some paradox, as, for example, the stems of huge oaks that are found embedded in the marsh. In an excellent article in the *Edinburgh Review* on the rural industry of Holland, the writer says: "In the fenny districts of Lincolnshire the higher bogs abound with the stems of trees, most of which are oak; while in the lower fens they are usually of fir. So far as the higher bogs are concerned, this accords with Dutch experience. In the North of Ireland also the roots and stems of oak are more numerously met with than those of pine. In draining a single acre of black bog a friend of ours took out nine tons of oak, in such preservation as nearly to pay the whole expenses of the improvement."

In these marsh lands we see vast changes that in a rapid way remind us of the geological changes of ancient times; but I can hardly refrain from alluding here to a wide district in Western Canada that was metamorphosed in a more rapid way than even Ovid would have dreamt of in his diluvium—"Expatiata ruunt per apertos flumina campos"—even though it may not exactly correspond in all its aspects to the country we are considering. There was a large pine-wood near Rice Lake that had grown up very rapidly, perhaps on the *débris* of some previous forest, and within an almost incredibly short time it became a swamp. Every element of its transformation was apparent when I happened to see it, and I was glad of the explanation of an intelligent Canadian to account for the phenomenon. The trees had grown very rapidly, and the roots had been checked in their downward course by the cold waters that were stagnant in the undrained lands; hence they turned up to the surface again. A growth of underwood and couch-grass soon sprang up under the almost tropical sky, and after a hot July the undergrowth became baked and dry. Some accident ignited the growth, and the fire spread rapidly, exposing the roots of the trees, which, having no grip in the soil, fell down at once. The spongy earth sank under their

accumulated weight; and descending rain soon began to lie on the surface and reduce the land back to its state of morass. It is exceedingly interesting to find so grand a remain as Croyland Abbey in a district where we should so little expect it, and its early history is full of romance and legend. A monk of great piety, named Guthlac, had separated himself from the outer world and resolved to live the life of a hermit, though he possessed ample means and belonged to an ancient family; and it so happened that Ethelbald, tired out with his many internal wars and the continued hostility of his cousin, who was in arms against him, sought the friendship and society of Guthlac. This venerable recluse assured him of his regard, and told him that his troubles were approaching an end. "Know how to wait," he said, "and the kingdom will come to thee, not by violence or rapine, but by the hand of God." The good old Guthlac did not live to see his prediction verified; but Ethelbald's cousin, who had usurped his throne, fell "frenzy-stricken" at his board, and Mercia at once selected Ethelbald for its king. He showed his gratitude to the scene of his former refuge by founding the splendid Abbey which now remains. Of course none of his work is left, but the present ruins occupy the site of the original structure. In the old chronicles

there is mention of a triangular bridge at Croyland in Ædred's time, or about 950 A.D., and this has caused the belief that the singular structure which is illustrated above is of such antiquity. Of course there were many miracles performed at the shrine of Guthlac for long after his sepulture. Pilgrims were attracted from more smiling lands; and a singular decree was passed, that any one who had performed the pilgrimage, and who wore the emblem of Guthlac on leaving the place, should be free of tolls in the whole kingdom of Mercia.

In 1720 a curious old place was pulled down in the Abbey precincts called "Anchor Church House;" and it has been supposed that this is "Anchorage House," or the seat of Guthlac the anchorite, though now there is not a single stone left upon another by which the probability of such a legend could be tested.

Monk Fælix, who, as Camden says, was a "very ancient monk," supplies us with a poem in fairly good Latin that chronicles the good deeds of this marsh-land saint, and there can be no doubt that he lived an exemplary self-denying life, and contented himself under many hardships and troubles. He brought oak and sand in boats from a distance of nine leagues, and "cemented" the ground into a rock, and had to fight for every inch of land against great odds. Some of

the difficulties he had to contend with, his enthusiastic historian says, would have appalled any other man; and if the account of the aborigines is reliable, we may fairly doubt whether he would have prevailed against them with weapons of carnal warfare. They endeavoured to stop his work at every stage; and it is not likely that an abbey would be a congenial sight to a population who, he says, had "blubber-lips, fire-spitting mouths, scaly visages, enormous heads, strutting teeth, pointed chins, hoarse throats, sable skins, spindle shoulders, and fiery loins!"

Whittlesea, in Cambridge, is the illustration at the beginning of this chapter, and it is a really pleasant country town, built quite in the middle of marsh lands. It lies about six miles to the south-east of Peterborough, and almost puzzles one, as being the site of a Roman station—unless, indeed, the mystery might in some degree be solved by supposing that the changes in the aspect of the country are of comparatively recent growth, and the vast fen lands were not in so desolate a condition during the Roman occupation; and it has always seemed to me that the period which succeeded the Roman exodus, and of which we know so little, may have altered for the worse the character of these low lands.

We walked early in the morning from Peterborough to Whittlesea. It was a pleasant day at the end of September, and we saw the vast marsh lands to perfection. The sun had cleared away the fog before we reached the King's Dyke, and everything looked like peace and prosperity. There were at intervals piles of stones to keep the roads in repair, and here and there a few men working upon them. The cattle, the sheep, and horses were all looking fat and lazy on rich marsh pastures; and the very few farmers we met as they were driving to Peterborough had a happy bucolic look, as if the next rent-day was already provided for. It was just the morning in which existence is a delight, and when even marsh lands wear a roseate hue. Branches of the Nene were cut at times along the roadside, and the bluff-bowed flats in which stones were brought to repair the highway completed the likeness to a Dutch landscape. We saw no fewer than four flights of wild ducks, and one seemed simply to have risen from the marsh to tantalise us. My friend had suggested the expediency of putting our guns under our arms, as they were light, and of carrying a dozen cartridges in our pockets; but this was overruled, partly because sport was not expected, and partly through vanity. "It would have rather a Cockney look as we

came back to Peterborough, you know." We might have secured four out of one flock that crossed over the road within twenty yards. There were two small pools apparently near King's Dyke, and a flock of fifteen rose, eight in the first flight, and seven in the second ; and as these flocks were several yards apart, there would have been no danger of our casting a longing eye on the same bird. The only satisfaction left was to point out that if we *had* brought our guns the ducks would have remained quietly in the reedy pools, and we should not have had the satisfaction of seeing the flight. The town of Whittlesea is really very pleasant, and quite an oasis in the desert. There are three churches, and one of them has an ancient spire of great beauty, built in the fourteenth century, though containing some more recent work ; and there are some very fine houses. We especially noticed a large quaint-gabled one, with a pair of huge rusticated stone gate piers, and standing back in pleasant shade-trees. There is also a quaint and ancient canopied Market Cross in the middle of the large open Market Square, which resembles the one at Oakham and the one at Abbots Bromley, in Staffordshire. The spire of the church is very light and beautiful, and shows charmingly above the houses that surround the market-place.

It was a happy thought to walk out, and return by the train that reached Peterborough at twenty minutes past ten, for we could tell our landlord at the Angel the exact time when he must have breakfast ready. It would be a late one, we advised him; but he proved quite equal to the occasion. "Will you please to order it, gentlemen?" he said; but we decided at once to let him have his uncontrolled option, partly to test the capacity of our hotelkeeper, and also for the pleasure of the uncertainty. We had taken fully three hours for our journey, and were quite ready to sit in judgment on almost an unlimited variety of dishes. We had on a side-table a round of beef and a boiled ham, and on the breakfast-table itself a dish of Cambridge sausages and fried eggs, followed by a roasted mallard. The sauce was prepared very rapidly according to directions given at the time; to wit, a tablespoonful of Harvey's sauce, a large glass of port, a little cayenne and salt, and the juice of half a large lemon; this, poured hot upon the breast of the bird, which must have had a few gashes made in it previously, is the perfection of wild-fowl sauce. Again, we could not avoid comparing the genius of English and French landlords. Far be it from me to say that the former have nothing to learn from the latter; often they have in cleanliness, though

that not always, but much oftener still in economy and thrift of management; but as far as actual cookery is concerned, the English landlord, if we find the right sort—and there are many of them—can fairly hold his own.

Peterborough, with its beautiful market-place and its noble Cathedral, will be another starting-point, and be treated in a separate paper; but if we continue our route for the present trip in an easterly direction we shall pass the exquisite remains of Thorney Abbey; and, going through Wisbeach, we may admire the ancient church of St. Mary, with its two naves and its beautiful tower and monuments; and we might do worse than pay a visit to the Rose and Crown, which has been occupied as a tavern since the year 1475.

We shall be struck in entering King's Lynn with its very Continental aspect. It might, indeed, belong to the Low Countries, on the other side of the German Ocean, and the Dutch features of many of the dwellers there would certainly not tend to remove the delusion. King's Lynn is familiar to all of us from early days as the place where John lost the baggage of his army as he crossed from Lynn to Sleaford. We all know his evil ways, and his cruelty, his vassalage to the Pope, and his fear of meeting any assemblage of his subjects.

When the Magna Charta was wrung from his unwilling hands, and twenty-four nobles were appointed to see that he kept his agreement with the Barons, it is recorded that he threw himself on the floor and gnawed sticks and straws in his impotent rage, and kept calling out, "They have given me twenty-four over-kings." The rising tide overtook his baggage and the rear of his army as they crossed from Lynn to Sleaford, and John escaped just with his life to the Abbey at Swineshead. This abbey has for long ceased to be, and the family of Lockton built a mansion in the neighbourhood out of the stones. There is a legend, which appears in some histories, that John was poisoned by a monk at Swineshead Abbey, but it is without confirmation. He certainly caught a marsh fever, and was not prevented by it from using such strength as he possessed in a night of excess, and he left Swineshead for Newark only to die. Camden says that King's Lynn had no rival except London for its trade in wine; and there is no doubt, if we consider the fine old merchants' palaces, and the wharves that have seen much more active times, that it is only a relic of its former self. The Market Square—that is, the larger one, for there are two—contains a magnificent palace, called the "Duke's House," which is now used as an inn. The front is of

MARKET-PLACE, KING'S LYNN.

stone, and the enrichments are of Charles the First's time, and are beautifully carved.

Lynn also contains the Church of the Grey Friars, and the gateway and part of the boundary-wall of the White Friars. The Black Friars' monastery has been swept away entirely, though rather extensive remains of it were to be seen before the introduction of the railway. The gatehouse formed a picturesque cottage, and led into a courtyard, in which were the remains of a Tudor doorway and some windows. There is also just a remnant of the Augustine Friars' monastery, which is said to have been equal in magnitude and splendour to any now remaining in Lynn. It entertained King Henry VII. and his queen, Prince Arthur of Wales, and Margaret, Countess of Richmond, the king's mother, with a very numerous retinue. These Augustines have been described as in some respects resembling the Jesuits of modern days. Their rules were not so stringent as those of other orders, and they mixed freely with the society of the outer world. According to Dugdale, there seem to have been no fewer than ten religious houses in Lynn, all of which were suppressed at the Reformation. The Grey Friars' tower, a beautiful octagonal turret, is the most important remain of any of them that is left. Eugene Aram, a character for

whom Bulwer Lytton entertained an almost romantic admiration, was the master of the Grammar School of

LINCOLN, FROM WYTHAM BASIN.

Lynn, and it was here that he was suddenly arrested and the revelations took place that have laid the foundation for one of Bulwer's most successful novels.

Lincoln, of course, is the crowning city of the fens, and its grand Cathedral rises up at vast distances over the flat landscape. The Cathedral is only equalled in its situation by Durham—equalled, but certainly not excelled. The one rises over the Tees, and has nearly every accessory of beauty to assist its outline; while the other, on even a steeper hill, is a beacon for many miles of low land. The ascent to the Cathedral is very steep—so steep, indeed, that carriages cannot ascend it; and one can understand the punning epitaph of the early part of the seventeenth century on Doctor Otwell Hill:—

> 'Tis Otwell Hill, a Holy Hill,
> And truly, sooth to say,
> Upon this Hill he praisèd still
> The Lord both night and day.
> Upon this Hill this Hill did cry
> Aloud the Scripture letter,
> And strove your wicked villains by
> Good counsel to make better.
> And now this Hill, tho' under stones,
> Has the Lord's Hill to lie on,
> For Lincoln's Hill has got his bones,
> His soul the Hill of Sion.

One is fairly appalled, as one reads his epitaph, at the tempest of bad puns of which Otwell Hill has been the victim; but nothing can disturb our admiration of the

glorious city he dwelt in. The interior of the Cathedral is certainly finer than York, even if we must admit that the exterior is in most respects not so shapely. The west front is undoubtedly severe in its style, yet it is with that point of view that we are most familiar; but the eastern end is full of the most delicate work, including some graceful statues, and for sculptors to rival them we should have to go far indeed.

The Roman name of Lincoln was Lindum Colonia, being formed, as has been reasonably conjectured by Britton, of two words; the first a Romanised version of *llyn*, meaning a lake or spreading water, a term we are familiar with from its use in Wales; and the latter *dun*, a high rising mound, both of which are descriptive of its situation. We are all familiar with the fine old Roman archway that spans the road which enters Lincoln from the north. It is in perfect condition, and is the only one of Roman construction left in England. The view of Lincoln Cathedral shown on a previous page, is very characteristic of the city, and is hardly surpassed in picturesqueness in any town view in England. The river Wytham forms a basin, round which are warehouses and stores; and there is a small island a little below the place whence this view has been taken. It is covered with shapely willows, and swans glide past it

and through the Dutch-looking craft that so often fill the basin. The warehouses are not picturesque, but in an artistic representation they could be hidden in a hundred ways by vessels carrying a mainsail or foresail set, or they could be made to blend with standing rigging. The Minster rises grandly above all, and seems, either at the rising or setting sun, like one unnaturally vast gray mass of masonry.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CINQUE PORTS.

Cinque Ports and Roman occupation—"Count of the Saxon Shore"—Freemen of Cinque Ports—Hythe—Hythe Church and chancel—Smugglers and coastguard—Saltwood Castle—Thomas à Becket—Becaficos and fig-culture—Folkestone—Dover Castle and its capture by Parliamentarians—Sandwich—New Inn, Romney, and dinner there—Ducks on Romney Marsh—Fearful tempest in Edward I.'s time—Dignitaries of the Cinque Ports—Rye—Lord Warden of Cinque Ports.

THE Romans, in their short but brilliant occupation of this country, intersected the length and breadth of the island with roads and watercourses, and studded it with cities and palaces. Of course, its wealth naturally excited the cupidity of their neighbours, and the strangers were beset with enemies on the north and on the south. They made the inhabitants of the conquered country hewers of wood and drawers of water,—the life of the ancient Briton was often spent at vast depths beneath the surface of the earth, in small cavernous tunnels in lead mines and copper mines; indeed, those

that have been exposed in Cardiganshire and elsewhere fill one with wonder at the mere fact that human beings could be found who were able to exist in them. The broader shafts of the present day expose, and often intersect, passages not more than three feet in height, sometimes not even that. Then, the masters of the ancient Briton made him till the land, and square and quarry stones, and, under their engineers, assist at road-making. He was discouraged from carrying arms, if not absolutely forbidden, and hence the easy prey he fell to the hordes from the north, and the south, and the east. The defence of the country therefore rested entirely with the Romans, and as their frontier-line was so great, they were obliged to make the best of their communications with each other. Hence the Roman Wall, which stretches across Northumberland and Cumberland. It was not supposed for a moment that it would present a serious barrier for any length of time to the hordes of the Picts and Scots that marauded from the north. But to the south of the wall were castles, and barracks, and villages, and an admirable system of communications; so that, wherever the invader appeared, the forces of the defender could be concentrated during the temporary check of the wall. But from the south, invaders came across the seas,

attracted by the wealth which the Roman energy had developed in Britain, and that often from unlikely sources. So, however, it was—

Tollit humo saxum ; saxum quoque palluit auro.

In order to check the invasions from the south, the Romans, though superior to the sea-kings on the water, devised the following scheme to prevent surprise. They created an officer, whom they called the "Count of the Saxon Shore," and placed under his command nine different stations along the coast. Reculver, Richborough, Dover, and Hythe were the stations in Kent, the county that we are at present considering ; and it was the convenience and excellence of the arrangement that led William the Conqueror to continue it under altered forms. The Cinque Ports in those days were required to furnish vessels for the imperial navy, and in return had certain privileges and immunities.

The inhabitants of these ports were always on the watch to prevent surprises, and were drilled to a degree of efficiency that made them most valuable defenders. In the reign of Edward I. the Cinque Ports equipped a fleet of a hundred ships, and gave such a blow to the maritime power of France that the coasts of England enjoyed quiet for a long time after.

The freemen of all the ports are called barons, and in former days they stood very much indeed upon their dignity, and ranked with the barons of the land. On the occasions of coronations thirty-two of them were elected to carry the canopy over the king, and afterwards dined at Westminster Hall on a table which stood at the monarch's right hand. The claim to this privilege seems to have been questioned for the first time at the coronation of George III., and the table was not placed precisely according to ancient custom; in consequence of which, the "barons" refused to dine with his Majesty at all. The original Cinque Ports were Hastings, Sandwich, Romney, Dover, Hythe, Rye, and Winchelsea, and, as their name and traditions teach us, they were at the time of their foundation good harbours. But by some means, partly natural and partly artificial, Hastings, Romney, and Hythe have lost their rivers. There is a goodly tract of land between Hythe and the sea, and cattle pasture where not so very long ago the tide ebbed and flowed; and as for Romney, it is in the middle of a marsh that covers nearly 50,000 acres, and is not only well drained, but supports great flocks of long-woolled sheep and short-horned cattle. These ports had what were called limbs or members—we might almost call them de-

pendencies—which had nearly equal privileges and equal responsibilities. Seven ports are mentioned here, and perhaps a question might arise how these can be called cinque ports. Indeed, one is reminded of a recent trial in Ireland, where it was found, on counting the jury when the case was concluded, that they numbered thirteen. It could probably not have happened in any other country, but the counsel for the defence was of an arithmetical turn and made the discovery. Well, the Cinque Ports originally were only five, but Rye and Winchelsea were added after the Conquest. Hythe is exceedingly pleasant, and promises to be a great watering-place. The shore is pebbly, and the water very bright and clear; and when the notes were taken for this chapter, an enormous hotel was approaching completion which would accommodate an untold number of strangers. But our walk lies more in the older parts of the town, and, though these have been sadly diminished in proportions, there are yet a number of old-fashioned houses left. The shipping, with its tonnage, that Hythe was compelled to furnish, gives us a singular insight into the character of the frail barks that were entrusted to the ocean; and when we read of the small vessels with which Hudson and Davis discovered the vast waters that

bear their name, we are lost in astonishment that craft not nearly the size of a Newcastle collier could have made such marvellous discoveries, and carried men and provisions for a journey that has penetrated nearly as far north as the expeditions of our own time, which were provided with vessels and appliances quite as superior for the purpose as, in naval warfare, an iron-clad is to an old galliot. Of course the necessities of such small craft developed the higher qualities of seamanship, just as we have known of ocean steamers coming to grief, and an officer who has been accustomed to the saloon working the boat that has just left the davits—awkwardly at first—but becoming an adept in twenty-four hours, much more of an adept than he could have become in as many days by amateur labour on a summer's holiday at a watering-place. It has been suggested that a very different kind of measurement prevailed then; but though there are doubtless differences in the calculation of tonnage, these would not account for the seeming paradox of such a wide variation, and we are compelled to think that the great explorers of Elizabeth's time made up by boldness what they lacked in the capacity of their ships. The Romans who occupied England never had a vessel in which they dared to leave the coast-line, when they

made their tedious voyage to our shores; and though certainly Hudson and Davis had better vessels than they, we may believe that the hardihood of the early navigators accounted for the tonnage. We can thus more easily understand the size of the ships that are recorded as the quotum Hythe had to furnish for fifteen days annually to the Royal Navy. Five vessels, with a crew of twenty-one men and a boy for each, was all that Hythe, with its auxiliary Westmeath, was called on to supply in time of war, for the many privileges it enjoyed. And this is a fair illustration of the tax which was laid upon the other Cinque Ports.

The chancel of Hythe church is a noble specimen of Early English architecture. It rises from the nave by a double flight of steps that are spanned over by a lofty pointed arch, which is beautifully moulded. The date of its construction would seem to be about the year 1200, but it is in excellent preservation. There are few more interesting or perfect studies for an architect than this chancel. It has lancet windows, the remains of a beautiful triforium, sedilia, and the slender shafts that characterise the period. The church rises high above the town, and from the churchyard there is a fine view of the coast of France. Underneath the chancel we have been considering is a large crypt, and

this contains a heap of human skulls that so far have not been satisfactorily accounted for. They are neatly piled in a heap of some twenty-eight feet long and seven feet high, which must contain many thousands. These are traditionally said to be the remains of a Danish army that landed on the shore and was put to rout. This has been doubted because Leland has not alluded to it, and his well-known accuracy is quoted as a reason why they could not have been there when he visited the place; but this is hardly conclusive, for even with all his accuracy he cannot have chronicled everything he saw or heard of; and there are certainly some things he took from hearsay, though his work is of very great value to the present generation, and stands almost alone.[1]

I give on the following page a sketch of a house in Hythe, with a curious sort of attic on the roof, that looks towards the sea. From this the coasts of Flanders and Picardy are very visible; and, after obtaining permission to see it, I felt no doubt that the title given to it of the Smugglers' Lighthouse was correct. All the way from Dunkerque to the mouth of the Somme, the river on which Abbeville is situated, a smuggling

[1] The facial line, if any one would take the trouble to measure fifty or sixty of the relics, would go far to solve the question of nationality.

business was carried on in small vessels of light draught, that hoisted no mast-head light, but steered for the

SMUGGLERS' LIGHTHOUSE, HYTHE.

attic window or some other such beacon, and had been previously advised by a passenger pigeon—for these birds became almost as useful to the illicit merchants as

the luggers that carried their goods. The velvets and brandies were "run in" on a dark night, and the consignees had to make the best of their venture and overreach the coastguard by aid of their confederates. If the penalties had been no more severe than they are at present for smuggling, and *sus. per col.* did not so often figure in the chronicles of the period, the life of a smuggler, when no steamboats in the shape of revenue cutters could interfere with his amusements, might have offered reasonable attractions to an enterprising man; but it was only the occupation of the desperate or those that had been outlawed, and was carried on by armed men, who fought the coastguard to the very last, when the latter had the fortune to fall in with them; they well knew that to be taken in an armed resistance meant a felon's death. Near Hythe is a curious old half-timbered house (see next page), which is said to be the oldest in the neighbourhood; certainly it bears the marks of great antiquity. The inhabitants are very proud of it, and assign fabulous dates for its erection, the date of which must remain an unsolved problem—though the general character of the building might point to the reign of Richard II. It may be earlier or it may be later, but at any rate it serves a very good purpose as showing the impassable gulf between the

"upper" and "lower classes," as they were called; for the cottage shown and the feudal castle were as widely

OLD HOUSE, HYTHE.

apart as they are now, and there is no residence that I am acquainted with of the fourteenth or fifteenth

century that we should in the present time think suitable for a member of the "middle classes." In Hythe are two hospitals of very old foundation. One is dedicated to St. John, and one to St. Bartholomew. The latter was built by Hamo de Hythe, Bishop of Rochester, who was confessor to Edward II., and, let us hope, endeavoured to make him break off with his profligate favourite, Piers Gaveston, and the grasping mercenary Spencer. It is indeed recorded of him that he was most energetic and active in the discharge of his duties, and the Pope in the time of Edward III. refused to let him repose from his charge and lead a quiet life in his old age. The Act which enables dignitaries to retire had not been passed, and he said *nolo episcopari* in vain, for he was compelled to wear the mitre till his decease in 1352, and was buried in Rochester Cathedral, where he had for so many years been an active bishop, and where the remains of his monument may yet be seen. At the beginning of the present century Hythe was a very quaint old-fashioned place, and there were black and white houses, with overhanging gables and quaint corbels, such as we see in Canterbury or Chester; but now it is much modernised, and these are scarce. It consists principally of one long street running parallel to the sea;

the side streets are unimportant. About a mile from Hythe is Saltwood Castle, which was once a baronial residence. The ingenuity of historians has been much exercised to discover its origin; but it is full of stirring history in its annals. Once it was escheated to Henry II., but claimed by the overbearing Thomas à Becket for the church; and his claim seems to have been granted, though not until the reign of Richard II. This castle is very romantically situated, and at one time must have been a place of great strength; but only a portion of it is left, and this, with its deeply recessed windows, and groined roofs, and carvings, is converted into a farmhouse, the upper rooms of which are used for the labourers, and command fine views of the Channel and the white cliffs of France. Some of the old materials have been employed to build barns in the courtyard, and the whole place looks so peaceful and pleasant that one is almost ready to say, with Polonius,

> Let me no more be service to the state,
> But keep a farm and carters.

All this part of Kent figures in the Ingoldsby Legends, especially in the "Leech of Folkestone," in which Saltwood Castle is especially mentioned. But it is memorable as having been connected with a scene in English history that caused sensation enough in its

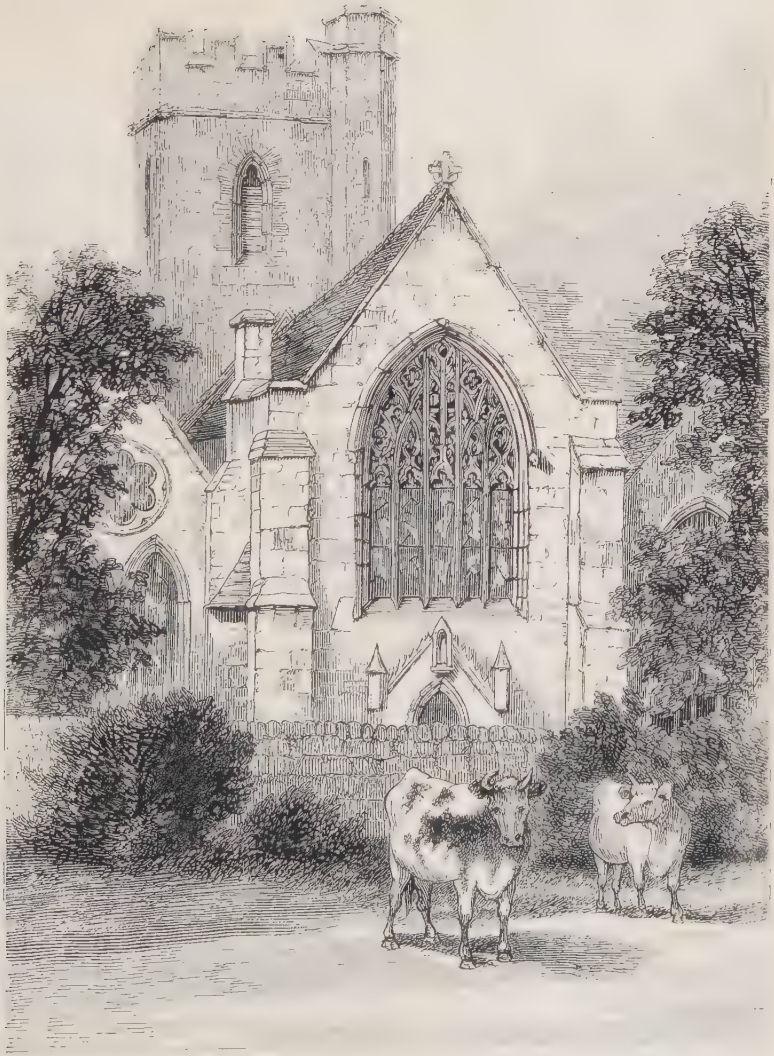
time. The four knights who killed Thomas à Becket made this place their rendezvous before they set out on their murderous errand; and I may introduce here a slight narrative that shows how profoundly the kingdom was moved by the act. In the Lady Chapel of Chester Cathedral is a boss placed too high for ordinary inspection, one of an interesting well-defined series; this one, however, defied any attempt at interpreting its meaning. "It passed," says Canon Blomfield, "with some, for the Assumption of the Virgin; with others, for the Resurrection of Our Lord, because the figures of armed men were apparent in it; but no one guessed the true subject till a cast was taken of it, and it could be examined on the ground." The murder of à Becket has been a very common subject with designers in stone and glass. I cannot remember any woodwork quite so old, but doubtless there were records in wood of the terrible deed. All the illustrations of it agree in the main with the recorded facts that are preserved in the "Memorials of Canterbury Cathedral," and the boss represents the moment when the final blow was struck by Richard de Brez, which cleft away the crown of à Becket's head. There are the four knights in chain armour, and the most sceptical critic could not doubt that the scene was the death of à Becket; besides, the

names of the quartette who left Saltwood Castle were Fitzurse, de Tracy, de Brez, and de Morville, and their armorial bearings are on the shields in the interesting boss of Chester Cathedral. If it is asked how such a memorial came there, I believe the following will be found a sufficient answer:—When the remains of Thomas à Becket were taken from the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral to be interred in the new chapel at the east end of the choir, the occasion being one of great pomp and grandeur, of course the church was quite alive to the advantages of the occasion, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, inaugurated rites of greater splendour than would have been seen at a royal burial or even a coronation. The weak and yielding Henry III. was foremost there, and all the prelates of England. Among the rest was William de Cornhill, Bishop of Chester, Lichfield, and Coventry. He brought home to Chester as a relic the girdle of à Becket, and the style of the architecture in which the boss is set precisely corresponds with what we should expect to find at the date of the ceremonies (1220). Doubtless, he was so impressed with the scene he had heard described, that he commemorated it on the boss. But another circumstance that it has been my good fortune to notice is of equal interest, and connects the

counties of Cheshire and Kent in a singular manner. The house where these chapters have been written contains, like many others in and round about Chester, some very curious old rooms, ornamented with ancient carving, and on a chimneypiece in an upper floor there is a somewhat rude sculpture of a bird pecking at some piece of fruit. The fruit is pear-shaped, and the singularity is that it seems to be in a kind of orchard where there are grapes. Now, all the West of England at one time grew grapes, and the monks made the wine for the monasteries. The date of the entablature of the chimneypiece alluded to, which has been removed from some ancient building, is about the year 1350, as far as the foliage is any indication; and the pear-like fruit is a green fig. The birds, for there are two of them pecking, are simply the Becaficos of France and Italy. All this flashed across me when I heard that the Becaficos had commenced to pay their short annual visit to Reculver, which lies near the part we are speaking of, and yet contains some fig-gardens. Of course, there are not many persons in England who ever heard that such birds came here at all, and perhaps not a few never even knew there were such creatures; but shortly after the Conquest there was an influx of monks from Normandy and Brittany, who introduced

many seeds and articles of value. Among others, the fig was a novelty, and the plains of Fécamp were renowned for this delicacy. English figs ripened rather later than those on the Continent, and hence the flocks of Becaficos, that had probably travelled from Spain and Italy, found their favourite food. Flights of them appear yet, though in diminished numbers, at Sompting, in Surrey, and Broadwater, where there are remains of ancient fig-gardens.

Figs are hardly ever cultivated now in Cheshire, except under glass, but with care and a fairly good season they ripen well, and it was my fortune to see several plants flourishing in a farm garden in the county, which, however, had at one time been in the orchard attached to a grange of Combermere Abbey. Of course, such visitors have long disappeared from this part of England, as the few figs that remain are not tempting enough to induce them to pay their visits; but it is interesting to think that a parallel cause to this may possibly account for the partial distribution of the nightingale, which is found at Richmond in Yorkshire, though unknown in Cheshire; and yet this is at least, we might suppose, a warmer county than York; but some seeds or plants probably tempt it to its favourite annual resorts.



EAST END OF FOLKESTONE CHURCH.

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To return, however, to our subject. We shall reach Folkestone soon after passing Sandgate, and this town is familiar to every traveller in the south of England. It is thus described in the "Leech of Folkestone," one of Barham's best legends:—"Rome stood on seven hills, Folkestone seems to have stood on seventy. Its streets, lanes, alleys—fanciful distinctions without much real difference—are agreeable enough to people who do not mind running up and down stairs, and the only inconvenience felt by such of its inhabitants as are not asthmatic, is when some heedless urchin tumbles down a chimney, or an impertinent pedestrian peeps into a garret window." The old part of the town yet answers this description; but the new part is filled with modern and handsome dwellings, where visitors and residents congregate. The east end of Folkestone Church, which is shown opposite, contains an excellent example of a window that is in a transition state from the Decorated or fourteenth century style to the Perpendicular. In the middle of the seventeenth century a coffin was found in the north wall of the south aisle of the church, and on opening it the corpse of St. Eanswith, who was the daughter of King Edbald, and founded the nunnery here, which was the first in England, was discovered. It was in perfect form, and on

each side were hour-glasses and medals. Unhappily for the credibility of the perfect condition of the body, the account proceeds to say that the inscriptions on the medals were obliterated. Now, as medals or coins are commonly deposited in a perfect condition, we can hardly think that they would have had wear and tear enough in the coffin to have defaced them. But this is the land of wonders, and along the coast witches and witchcraft were believed in at a later period than in other parts of England. St. Eanswith herself was able to do some very useful things in her lifetime, and would have been invaluable to such firms as Messrs. Trollope, or Messrs. Kelk and Lucas; for when on one occasion a beam was three feet too short for some bearing timber in her monastery, she solved the difficulty at once by increasing it to the desired length, much to the delight of the master builder; she also "haled and drew water from the rocks, against nature, from Sweeton, a mile off, to her oratorie at the sea side, . . . restored the blinde, and cast out the devill, etc., etc.," as the author of "Nova Legenda Angliæ" gravely assures us. The Folkestone cutters have long been noted for their excellence as sea boats, and were perfected in the smuggling days. Folkestone was the birthplace of the celebrated Dr. William Harvey, who

discovered the circulation of the blood; he was born in the reign of Elizabeth, and became physician to James I. and Charles I.

The castle of Sandgate was at no time of considerable dimensions, and was built by Henry VIII., about the year 1540, on a similar plan to Walmer. It is noted as the place where Queen Elizabeth stayed when she visited the coast of Kent to see that all was in order to resist the fleet that Philip and Torquemada had despatched, with its various instruments of wrought iron, and hinges, and screws, to restore the blessings of the true faith to England. To Dover is only a pleasant walk from Folkestone, and its great castle looms a long way off. This castle has often been called of Roman origin; but, though there are doubtless many remains of Roman occupation, there is no question that a fortress was built here long before the time of Cæsar. It is a wonderful castle, and with its houses and courtyards covers about thirty-five acres. In an old history by one Darell, the original building is assigned to the great Cæsar himself, and some very ancient writers who are quoted to say that the wine and salt which he laid in were there in historical times.

In the earlier period of English history, Dover Castle was considered the very key of the kingdom,

and in all times of civil commotion it was the first place that the contending parties sought to possess. Twice it has been besieged by the French, and was defended on each occasion by Hubert de Burgh, who was tempted to surrender it to the Dauphin on the second occasion by the offer of vast rewards, and a reminder that his master Henry II. was only just dead, and no successor had been appointed: but of course all in vain. In the civil wars, Dover Castle had a wonderful capture. On August 1, 1642, when the fortress was held by the king's troops, a merchant named Drake, a zealous Parliamentarian, attacked it with, history says, only about a dozen men. They scaled the rock facing the sea, which had always been considered inaccessible, and was consequently left without a guard. This they managed to do by the aid of ropes and scaling ladders, and seized the astonished and affrighted sentinel and threw open the gates; the officer on duty concluded that Drake had a strong force, and, thinking that all was lost, surrendered at discretion. On securing the fortress, it is said that Drake sent over to Canterbury to the Earl of Warwick, and received a reinforcement to secure it in safe keeping; but, as Canterbury is some fourteen or fifteen miles distant, one is tempted to suppose that Lord Warwick's forces were much

DOVER CASTLE.

COE, HANOVER
PUBLIC LIBRARY

nearer, and indeed that they were a party to Drake's attack. The King sent a considerable force to retake it; but Cromwell sent a larger to its relief, and the Royalists finally were compelled to raise the siege. After this Dover Castle was neglected, and if it did not fall into ruins, it was left to moulder away. It will hardly be believed that the terror inspired by the Pretender, in 1745, caused the Government to place it in a state of defence, and barracks were built in it sufficiently large to contain a whole regiment of soldiers; and at the French Revolution it was so far strengthened as to be a sort of English Gibraltar, and quite secure from any attack except a regular investment and siege. What chance it would have of withstanding the more modern artillery is, of course, a matter of conjecture, and may perhaps ever remain so. Dover is known as the first Cinque Port that ever enjoyed a charter, and it is the part of England which lies nearest to France; indeed, there are many steamers that could easily make the passage under favourable circumstances in an hour and a half. The brass gun, twenty-four feet in length, which was cast for Elizabeth at Utrecht, is still on the edge of Dover Cliff, and the legend of our childhood that it would carry its 24lb. shot to Calais, is yet held to be true by the youth of

Dover. One thing at least is certain, that if such a splendid weapon could be manufactured on the Continent in Elizabeth's time—and we are perhaps not quite informed of the metal which the Armada really carried, and which a series of storms and mishaps assisted to sink—we got rid rather cheaply of the Spanish fleet. The situation of Dover is very charming, and delights a new-comer. The church of St. Martin was always considered the mother church of Dover, but it was almost rebuilt in the reign of Edward VI. Churchill the poet is interred here, and a stone yet remains with the inscription,

> Life to the last enjoyed,
> Here Churchill lies.

After the commencement of hostilities with France in 1803, the heights about Dover were securely and very properly fortified; but one is a little at a loss to understand the use of the great military canal which was built in Pitt's time, and through the urgent efforts of the great commoner. This canal extends from Folkestone to Rye, or about twenty-three miles, and it is probably, on an average, eighty feet in width; an embankment on the shore side runs along it to protect the defenders of the soil, in case Napoleon should land. Its cost must have been enormous, but one hardly thinks that it

would in itself have awed the man that crossed the Alps and the Rhine.

Sandwich, another of the original Cinque Ports, is a pleasant but not important town. The highway that leads from it through Canterbury and Faversham on to Chatham is delightful, but, like the other Cinque Ports, it has lost its harbour. Influences even beyond the operations of nature were at work in this instance, and Cardinal Morton, with other landholders, enclosed and walled in marshes on the upper side of the river on which it is situated ; and, by ill luck, when, in the reign of Henry VIII., vigorous efforts were made to clear the harbour, a large vessel was so unmannerly as to go down at the very entrance, and it was soon covered up with sand. A new cut was commenced, but abandoned, and Sandwich would have probably fallen into decay entirely but for the persecutions of the Huguenots who fled for refuge to our shores, and became a strong power in after times to the country of their adoption. In workmanlike skill and in taste they excelled the English tradesmen, and some well-known names of French origin rank now high among the aristocracy of England, that can trace their ancestry to the time when Sandwich was prevented from falling into decay by the arrival of the strangers. The settlement of the

foreigners was the cause of Elizabeth's visit in 1573, and it appears from records yet extant that great preparations were made for her entertainment; probably with an accurate knowledge of the requirements of her followers, the brewers were cautioned "to brew good beer against her coming." Sandwich is certainly one of the quaintest-looking towns in Kent, and well worthy of a visit from any person who is called by business or pleasure to Canterbury. Romney, or "New Romney," is a decayed town, though it was once a seaport of note; now it stands in the middle of the great marsh alluded to; it requires some faith to believe that ships ever came here. Leland seems to speak of a somewhat sudden change that occurred just before his time, when he says that Romney was once a fairly good haven, and within the memory of man ships cast their anchors in one of the churchyards. Of course this was then covered by water. The church of St. Nicholas is a fine old specimen of architecture, and contains examples of all the styles by which Gothic is known among architects. We drove from Hythe, along Dymchurch Wall, a distance of eight or nine miles, on a brilliant summer's day, with a pleasant breeze blowing from the English Channel, and with the sky and water of the pale clear blue that indicates a continuance of fine weather. The

many-gabled hotel shown below, which is by a misnomer called the "New Inn," is the principal one in the place,

NEW INN, ROMNEY.

and we ordered dinner to be ready in two hours, while we went to inspect the town and the church. The

landlady was evidently to be trusted, so we left everything in her hands, and were not disappointed with the result. We had a turbot fresh from the "Channel" that may have weighed some three or four pounds, and that cost, we learned, fourteenpence from a fisherman, though such a fish is often disposed of for tenpence or a shilling; anchovy sauce, in lieu of lobster, seemed to meet the necessities of the occasion very well; and a couple of roasted ducks, that had been reared and fattened on Romney Marsh, were an excellent sequel. Here it is impossible to resist the temptation to place on record a calculation which we rapidly made of the number of ducks Romney Marsh would raise. We found that, if fifty square yards were allowed to each duck, and only one was sold a year from each fifty yards, at, say, eighteenpence—from such a surface the annual yield would be a quarter of a million sterling; and this is no more a fanciful or impracticable calculation than it would be to say that, if you sow an ear of corn, you will have in its place in due time fifty or sixty. The writer on one occasion, and on a very small scale, tried the experiment of keeping poultry in a croft, and the percentage was something fabulous; this, too, on such a scale as tested the experiment severely. But when a large number are kept, the yield increases by a

sort of geometrical progression; for ducks and poultry look after themselves to a certain extent, and a single hand can as well attend to the requirements of a thousand as of a hundred. "But where is the market?" some objector will say; and I can only add, that I believe there is a market for ten times as many as even Romney Marsh could raise; for it goes without saying that if the price is very much reduced, as it could so easily be for poultry, the demand would in the most bountiful way keep pace with it, and possibly run it rather a sharp race. When we never see a bill of entry without eggs or foreign poultry, it will be time enough to speak of glutting the market. But to return from a long digression on the capabilities of Romney Marsh, to our hospitable reception at the "New Inn." The bill for three was nine shillings, including cheese and pastry and a jug of ale. We must remember that we can easily find similar dinners in London for even a lower price; but then it is done wholesale there, and neglected country inns cannot in a moment extemporise a dinner. We had a bottle of wine that had been in the cellar among its fellows for years; and though I cannot now remember the exact price, that it represented value received would, I am sure, be the judgment of any impartial court. New Romney dates back to the reign of

William the Conqueror, and was built in the place of Old Romney, now a very inconsiderable decayed place, of great antiquity. It lies a little farther inland, and its harbour was one of the first to set the fashion of silting up which became afterwards so prevalent in this district. So great was its importance at the time of the Conquest, that by reason of the sea-service the inhabitants rendered to the Crown they were exempt from the penalties attaching to misdemeanours, and were only prevented from indulging in a few felonies which were specified in the Act. The river Rother formed an estuary two miles wide at the mouth, and gave Romney a capacious harbour; but a tempest that occurred in the reign of Edward I. altered its course, and it enters the sea by the Rye; still, even yet, a few pools of water are left to indicate its ancient channel. The water levels and drains of Romney Marsh are much frequented by wild fowl; it is a lonely place, and a perfect paradise for snipe, woodcocks (at times), godwits, and curlews. At the beginning of winter great flocks of wild ducks settle on its waters, and indeed they sometimes stay all the year round, and build there. Rye and Winchelsea, the ports that subsequently were added, are in Sussex. The same tempest that swallowed up Old Romney in Edward I.'s time was fatal also to

the harbours of these two towns. Winchelsea is merely a village with probably not a thousand inhabitants; yet in the reign of Henry VI. it was perhaps the chief port of embarkation to the Continent, and it shared with Southampton the honour of being the principal dépôt for French wines in England. Though the great tempest of Edward I.'s time proved fatal to the harbour of Winchelsea, it had suffered severely during a previous one that occurred in the reign of his father, and of which an ancient record is preserved: "In the month of October, 1250, the moon being in its prime, the sea passed over her accustomed bounds, flowing twice without ebb, and made so horrible a noise that it was heard a great way within land. At dark night the sea seemed to be a light fire, and to burn, and the waves to beat with one another, insomuch that it was past the mariners' skill to save the ships; and at Winchelsea, besides cottages for salt, fishermen's huts, bridges, and mills, 300 houses by the violent rising of the waves were drowned." A document at Rye states that in the year 1287, or thirty-seven years after the storm, and "on the eve of St. Agath the virgin, was the town of Winchelsea drowned, with the lands between Chemsden and Hythe." It was again revived by Edward, who granted lands for a new town, but it was pillaged by

the French, and afterwards by a marauding expedition from Spain; still, a harbour was left, which, however, was gradually deserted by the sea, and the dreary marsh that lies near the town was formed in its place. The end of the reign of Elizabeth seems to have been the period when its glories became extinct. Winchelsea was included in a royal visit of 1578, and the queen was amazed at the splendour of the scarlet robes and gold chains of the Aldermen and Corporation who went out to meet her, and even named the place "Little London;" but this was only a dying flicker. The dignitaries were then indeed in their ancient gorgeous apparel, but their greatness was almost over.

Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all except their sun has set.

The good old town died hard, and returned two members to Parliament—or one member to about seventy cottages—until the Reform Bill, when the fishermen were obliged to merge their ancient privileges into the requirements of the county of Sussex. Rye is not quite so forlorn; and though it, too, has seen better days, the census of 1881 will probably show a population of 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants. The church clock is the most ancient in England, and the church itself is an interesting building. The streets are not

only steep but winding and tortuous; and they are so curious that the town has been called, in order to distinguish it from Peckham Rye and Rye House, "Rummy Rye," by old residents. Ypres Tower was built by William de Ypres, in the twelfth century, as a defence against the invasions of the French, and is yet a strong building—at present used as a gaol. The principal source of prosperity to Rye now is the fishing trade; a new canal through which the river runs to the sea enables vessels of two or three hundred tons to reach its wharves, and turbot and mackerel and pilchards are sent in immense quantities to Billingsgate daily during their seasons. These two towns of Rye and Winchelsea were members originally of the most celebrated of all the Cinque Ports—Hastings. And not only is Hastings the best known in history, but it is the most picturesque; the long steep descent to it from Fairlight Down is extremely beautiful, and discloses the old town in a narrow valley, sloping towards the sea, and enclosed by high hills. Hastings gave his title to Lord Hastings, who was so barbarously murdered in the Tower by Richard III. when he sent the Bishop of Ely for strawberries from his garden in Holborn (Richard III., act iii. sc. 4); and one of his descendants sold it to the Pelham family, whose property it now is.

The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports generally holds the office of Constable of Dover Castle. Walmer Castle is the residence of the Warden, and it was a favourite seat of the Duke of Wellington when he held the office. Great shoals of mackerel sometimes congregate in the vicinity, and a few years ago a tale went the round of the London papers of one of these shoals being entrapped by two lucky fishermen; the men could not haul it in except by slow and not easy stages, while the fish were, of course, escaping by scores in all directions; a passer-by volunteered his assistance, and in the end a noble haul of mackerel was landed. The grateful fishermen pressed their helper to accept half-a-dozen, and he left with a string of these fish in his hand, remarking that he had earned his breakfast. Much was the amazement of the proprietors of the nets when a companion joined them, and said that the party in the shooting-coat going towards Walmer was Lord Granville, the Warden of the ports. The office of Warden will probably be abolished in the course of time, for it certainly does seem a little singular that not only have the duties imposed on the burgesses become obsolete, but the ports themselves are now for the most part stranded on dry land far away from a haven.

CHAPTER IX.

STAFFORDSHIRE AND ITS TOWNS.

Staffordshire and its climate — Brindley — Mr. Gladstone's tribute to Wedgwood—Primitive style of life in the manufacturing districts during last century — Isaac Walton—Madeley — Lycett explosion — Brindley's success in mills — Betley — Birthplace of Mary Howitt — William Howitt's picture of country-life in England's last century—Burton-on-Trent—Burton Abbey—Abbots Bromley—Hobby-horse dance.

THE county of Stafford is not generally regarded as one that offers great temptations to an excursionist, or to any one who wishes quietly to explore the rustic beauties of England, or its unchanged, old-fashioned country towns. We are apt to associate Stafford with the "black country," and to remember its mining capabilities. It is the land of pottery, and iron, and coal; and, owing to its elevation and its inland situation, it is one of the coldest counties in England. It is only exceeded in the number of its inhabitants by four other counties, according to the latest census;

these are respectively, and in their proper order, Lancashire, Middlesex, Yorkshire, and Surrey.

Since the beginning of the present century the population of Staffordshire has increased to an extent that seems almost incredible. From the year 1801 to 1871, its growth was 250 per cent; and between the census of 1831 and that of 1871 it had more than doubled its population. It is not a little singular that this vast increase is owing, in great part, to the genius of one man, who developed the system of canals that now convey the industries of the county to the most distant markets. Born in the Moorlands, surrounded by a populace that was more than half savage, quite unlettered, and ignorant of the laws of Hydrostatics and Hydraulics as taught in schools, James Brindley was at the same time the most consummate water engineer of whom any record is preserved in history, and his canals altered the whole energy of England—immeasurably for the better. The Grand Trunk Canal was his magnificent conception, and is now the great highway for the heavy manufactures of the county. He settled at the old-fashioned town of Leek, in the north-eastern part of the county, when the motive-power of industries was water, and not steam; and under his marvellous genius the very system of mill-engineering was changed,

and he only left it to complete his great mission after he had acquired the position of a practical millwright. But his canals, as it happened, co-operated in their uses with the works of another genius, Josiah Wedgwood, and enabled the latter to convey his incomparable wares to the markets of the world. It is hardly too much to say that, through the skill of these men, the wealth of the county has been trebled. But though the native grasp which enabled Brindley to control cataracts, and make water the meekest of servants through the length and breadth of the land, is now perhaps appreciated in England, we must not forget that Wedgwood, in his line, was almost equally a benefactor to his country. Mr. Gladstone, however, gave his history so well at the unveiling of his statue at Burslem, that we cannot do better than take our text from him. Wedgwood, it seems, was the youngest of a family of thirteen, and he was put to learn his father's trade of a "thrower," to earn his bread at eleven years of age, till he was smitten down by smallpox, and the amputation of a limb was necessary; and, as Mr. Gladstone says, for once we probably owe a debt of gratitude to that terrible disease, as his loss "put him upon thinking whether, if he could not be an active English workman, he might not be something else, and something greater.

It sent his mind inwards, it drove him to meditate upon the laws and secrets of his art. The result was that he arrived at a perception and grasp of them which might have been envied, certainly have been owned, by an Athenian potter;" and it is not a little strange that, though we were dependent on other nations for our crockery wares, he worked a complete revolution, and "by his single strength reversed the inclination of the scales, and scattered the productions of his factory over all the breadth of the continent of Europe. In travelling from Paris to St. Petersburg, from Amsterdam to the farthest points of Sweden, from Dunkirk to the southern extremity of France, one is served at every inn with English earthenware." Of course, the vast industry that Wedgwood introduced has somewhat altered the aspect of many Staffordshire towns that were once very picturesque. In the middle of last century there were no shops in the Potteries, and the people were supplied by itinerant vendors, who brought their goods on pack-horses. In a curious book written by Sir Richard Whitworth in 1766, and which is quoted by Mr. Samuel Smiles, is the following curious estimate of the mercantile conveniences for transport: "There are three pot-waggons go from Newcastle and Burslem weekly, through Eccleshall and Newport to

Bridgenorth, and carry about eight tons of pot-ware every week at £3 per ton. The same waggons load back with ten tons of close goods, consisting of white clay, grocery, and iron, at the same price delivered on their road to Newcastle. Large quantities of pot-ware are conveyed on horses' backs from Burslem and Newcastle to Bridgenorth and Bewdley for exportation—about a hundred tons yearly at £2 : 10s. per ton. Two broad-wheel waggons (exclusive of pack-horses) go from Manchester through Sheffield weekly, and may be computed to carry 312 tons of cloth and Manchester wares in the year, at £3 : 10s. per ton. The great salt trade that is carried on at Northwich may be computed to send 600 tons yearly along this canal, together with Nantwich 400, carried chiefly now on horses' backs, at 10s. per ton on a medium." What a picture that gives of the pottery towns even after the middle of last century! Where there is now one continuous town of seven and a half miles in length, and three in breadth, there were only detached hamlets of black-and-white houses, or an occasional old-fashioned stone one, and the inhabitants looked out, in fair weather and foul, for the heavy four-wheeled waggon or the pack-horses that brought them their groceries and their clothing.

How the aspect of the old towns has altered in

these districts let the following few particulars about Manchester tell. The population of this great city was exactly half that of Chester, not, as we may be well excused for supposing, at the time of the Tudors, but during the second half of last century; and here is a description of a Manchester manufacturer, according to Dr. Aikin: "An eminent manufacturer during the eighteenth century used to be at his warehouse before six in the morning, accompanied by his children and apprentices. At seven they all came in to breakfast, which consisted of one large dish of water-pottage—made of oatmeal, water, and a little salt, boiled thick and poured into a dish. At the side was a pan or basin of milk, and the master and apprentices, each with a wooden spoon in his hand, without loss of time dipped into the same dish, and thence into the milk-pan, and as soon as it was finished they all returned to their work." What would an "eminent manufacturer" think of the luxury of a journeyman of the present day? As for a commercial traveller, his style of living would probably be what he would expect to see at Windsor or Knowsley. Yet these men were wealthy, and sent out travellers for orders, and had gangs of chapmen to distribute goods, and bring back pay either in wool or other staples. The money accounts they collected

themselves: and the frequent gibbets, as Mr. Smiles has said, that they saw along the roadside, were so many warnings of their danger. In the last century, the whole length and breadth of England must have been like some of the rustic parts of Germany, or the outlying districts of Normandy or Brittany; and if we consider the vast destruction of Abbey buildings for their materials, the substitution of brick dwellings for black-and-white, and the "restoration" of churches, we shall not be far wrong in supposing that it was not inferior in interest to any part of Europe. In an engraving of "Manchester and Salford" published last century, the "old church" (cathedral) tower rises high above a cluster of gables; and there is every reason to believe that there may have been as fine sketching in the streets as there is in Shrewsbury, or York, or Warwick. The silvery Irwell has a few sail-boats on its limpid surface, meadows with cattle come within a short distance of the ancient church, and the artist has evidently chosen the scene as a pleasant pastoral landscape broken by an old country town.

If we leave the industrial seats of Staffordshire for the rural parts, we shall never have far to proceed before we find ourselves in scenes of sylvan beauty. In the north-eastern parts of the county the land rises high,

and there are moors where grouse congregate, and peaty streams where trout assume the dark colour that enables them to assimilate themselves to the aspect of the river-bed they dart over. All these high lands are of course only a continuation of the Derbyshire Peak, and as it were the settling down of that uplifted region into the quiet country which is known as the basin of the Trent, and which includes the principal part of the surface of the county.

Stafford is the county of Isaac Walton—for he was a native of it—and Norton Bridge Station, so familiar to the travellers of the London and North-Western Railway, is within a short distance of the spot where the great apostle of the rod and line was born. The hills of Staffordshire are finely alluded to in Walton's "Angler," in the second part, which was written by Mr. Cotton ("Viator"): "That your meal is so soon ready is a sign your servants know your certain hour, sir. I confess I did not expect it so soon, but now 'tis here you shall see I will make myself no stranger." Some shallow critic once compared this sentence to the often-quoted interview between Mr. Congreve and Voltaire: "Your servants know your certain hour, sir;" as though Mr. Cotton, who was a considerable landed proprietor, desired to parade his household establish-

ment; but nothing can be more unjust. Congreve, who succeeded after many generations to the noble Manor of Aldermaston, which yet contains some of the most valuable examples of Tudor architecture in England, received Voltaire, not as an author, but as the Lord of the Manor of Aldermaston; and Voltaire's reply is so often quoted, that it would not be alluded to here unless it bore reference to the point in question. "I did not come here to see the Lord of Aldermaston, but Mr. Congreve the author." He was, of course, shocked out of all his proprieties at the thought that he would consider a country squire of ever so many acres a more important personage than the author of the "Old Bachelor" or the "Double Dealer." It so happens that Congreve was a son of Richard Congreve, of Congreve in Staffordshire.

But a reference to the pages of Walton will show that the comparison just mentioned is not just, and merely referred to the ordinary experiences of Mr. Cotton's way of life. "Much good do your heart! and I thank you for that friendly word. And now, sir, my service to you in a cup of Morelands ale; for you are now in the Morelands, but within a spit and stride of the Peak. Fill my friend his glass." Mr. Cotton had considerable estates in Derby and Stafford, and in a

note to Mr. Edward Jesse's excellent edition it is said that his patrimony was so wasted that he fell at last into almost necessitous circumstances. Walton resided for a long time in this county, not very far from Madeley, and he wrote some of his immortal work in it.

MADELEY, STAFFORDSHIRE.

Near Madeley are the remains of an ancient castellated mansion, the seat of the Offley family, who are alluded to in some of his pages. The lake shown here is a beautiful pool of water in Madeley, opposite the inn which bears the name of the "Offley Arms." It is not

alluded to in the "Angler," though it contains some fine fish, such as Walton used to delight in. But Staffordshire is often spoken of in the work, especially in the part which treats of pike, for which the pool shown here is notable. Richard Franks, in his "Northern Memoirs," attacks Walton for what he has said in the following terms: "When I met him (Isaac Walton) at Stafford, I urged his own argument upon him, that pickerel weed of itself breeds pickerel;" and on this a solemn argument, according to Sir John Hawkins, occurred, in which Gesner, Dubravius, and Aldrovandus are brought in, and after a little demolished. The next footnote says that "a girl was washing her hand in a small pond in Staffordshire, when a pike seized it, and lacerated both her hand and arm very severely." There are legends of enormous pike being taken out of Madeley Lake, and it is said that there are as large ones in it as ever came out. At the farther end of the sheet of water the tower of Madeley Church is visible, and it contains in the chancel a marble monument to the son of Walton's friend and patron. This church and this scene, though very beautiful, bring back a recollection that will never be effaced from my mind. I was staying at the house of a friend within a mile of the lake; it was seasonable winter weather, and we

were in the middle of a frost. We had made a very early morning walk, which, however, was not entirely for pleasure. It was on January 22d, and the morning was cold and something raw; we were on our road home, when an unwonted sound struck our ears. It was distant, and almost like a peal of far-off thunder, or perhaps more like a volley of artillery fired at a very safe range. We asked each other almost at the same time what it could be, but soon dismissed the subject, though we met a rustic immediately afterwards who also seemed to have heard the same noise, and appeared to be listening for others of a similar kind, but we did not interrupt him. Still, we did ask another old man if he had heard anything. He, however, had been in the stable with his farm horses, and it was not incredible that he had heard nothing beyond the clatter of his horses' hoofs on the pavement of the floor. When we were at breakfast the whole circumstance had become forgotten, though indeed a copy of Byron, which lay on a table, suggested those words from the great ode on the "Eve of the Battle of Waterloo"—

> But hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell.

There was no necessity, indeed, for a subsequent line,

> But hark! that heavy sound strikes in once more.

The first was enough! After breakfast, we drove down again to Madeley to see a friend who was to accompany us on an excursion to an old town, every thought of the unwonted sound having been obliterated. But there were a few groups of people who seemed to be stricken down with awe, and the country town was comparatively deserted. We soon learned the occasion. The sound we had so lately heard was the terrible Lycett colliery explosion, which will perhaps (certainly let us hope) remain among the most appalling in history; and within three or four miles of the place where we had been walking two hours ago, seventy-five men, in the prime of life, were instantly killed. The scene in the churchyard on the following Saturday was one to be remembered indeed; graves were dug in every direction that the vicar could indicate for the interment of the charred remains, few of which bore anything like as near a resemblance to a human form as the mummy at Belzoni's exhibition which suggested the stanzas of Horace Smith's "Address."

Not far from the pool figured on a preceding page is the house here shown. It is a comfortable, quaint tenement, and, as will be remarked, the woodwork is singularly vertical. It is not common to see a house built on such very square lines; but the effect, as it

nestles in evergreens at the end of the little town, is not unpleasing. There is a legend over the window which

HOUSE IN MADELEY.

is just within an ordinary eyesight, and may in its day and generation have afforded much amusement to the indwellers, who would see a wayfarer who, in old

language, had "the benefit of clergy," spelling out the sentence from the highway. This sentence runs thus: "WALK, KNAVE: WHAT LOOK'ST AT?" and it has had many fanciful interpretations, such as concealment of coin, or the hiding of King Charles, either the first or second monarch; but against this it may fairly be urged that such an entablature would invite a search; besides, it could not have been suddenly carved and inserted in the building during a hurried visit of either of the monarchs; then, too, the style of the lettering would seem to accommodate itself to the building, which is of earlier date than that of either of the Charleses. It would seem to have a little of a rustic's notion of euphuism; for euphuism not only found expression in those days, but was thought so essential that no one could enter into good society without it. Of the same class, for example, is another sign on an ancient front, almost under the roof of which these pages are written: "God's providence is mine inheritance." Tales about the origin of the latter legend are of course abundant, the favourite one being that the builder of the house was spared from the ravages of the plague of 1666, and adopted the motto; but there is every reason to doubt the accuracy of such a solution. Not only are the design and style inconsistent with such a date; there is

the much more substantial reason that such a legend is not the one a man would adopt, under the circumstances, upon escaping a pestilence. It is probably the pious reflection of a young man who is starting in life, and who, let us hope, succeeded in his aspirations.

Madeley lies almost outside the district that has for so long been celebrated for supplying the world with earthenware, but a short drive takes us to Newcastle-under-Lyne; and from there the potteries extend for miles. Before the days of Wedgwood and Brindley, there were, as before said, old country towns here; but now they have become completely swamped in the great industry of England, and it would require an army of keepers to preserve the game on an estate between Longton, Stoke, Hanley, and Tunstall. Tunstall reminds us again of an episode in Brindley's life before he became famous—and his fame was eventually world-wide—though all round the district where he lived his genius was acknowledged. He had, while in early life, quite revolutionised the water-mills of the North, and invented machinery for cutting cog-wheels; and, not content with working in his own line merely, he introduced to the Staffordshire potters the system of grinding flint in water, thus doing the work much better, and saving many human lives.

A Mr. Baddeley, of Tunstall, employed him to erect a new mill on a large scale for him, which he commenced in 1757. "This new mill was driven by water-power, and the wheel both worked the pumping apparatus by which the adjoining coal mine was drained, and the stamping machinery for pounding and grinding the flints. The wheel, which was of considerable diameter, was fixed below the surface of the ground, and the water was conveyed to it from the mill pool through a small trough opening upon it at its breast, which kept the paddle-boxes of the descending part constantly filled without any waste whatever, and thus, by the rotation of the wheel, the pumps and stampers were effectually worked. The main shaft was more than two hundred yards from the mill; and to work the pumps Brindley invented the slide rods, which were moved horizontally by a crank at the mill, and gave power to the upright arm of a crank lever, whose axis was at the angle, and the lift at the other extremity. In course of time, as improvements were introduced in the grinding of flints, the stamping apparatus was detached from the machinery; but this water-wheel continued its useful and constant operation of pumping out the mines for forty years after the death of its inventor." And when in the present century the work was broken up, "the pump-trees,

which consisted of wooden staves firmly bound together with ashen hoops, were found to be lined with cow-hides, the working buckets being also covered with leather—a contrivance of which the like, it is believed, has not before been recorded." And what was Brindley's pay for his skill? There is an entry in his pocket-book regarding this marvellous piece of machinery that gives us a little insight:—"March 15, 1757. With Mr. Badley to Matherso' about a new flint mill, upon a windy day—one day 3s. 6d. March 19, drawing a plan—one day 2s. 6d. March 23, drawing a plan, and to sit out the wheel race—one day 4s.;" so that this incomparable engineer received ten shillings for three days' work. Shades of Stephenson and shades of Brassey!

Not far from Madeley is the charming little town of Betley. It is beautifully shaded with elms, and in the middle of it is situated Betley Hall, a large building almost abutting upon the road. A fine park is visible over the wall, and beyond that is Betley Mere—a considerable pool of water. There is an old church here which contains some black-and-white work—a very unusual thing in church architecture. The pottery district is not large; and when we leave it in any direction, we find ourselves in a beautiful country, even

though it has the credit of being among the coldest parts of England. The industries of which we have

BETLEY, STAFFORDSHIRE.

been speaking lie in the northern division of the county, but this part also contains two of the finest seats in England. Trentham, the seat of the Duke of Suther-

land, contains in its park one of the largest lakes in the country. It is artificial, and made by damming up the Trent in the same way that the lake at Blenheim is made by damming the Glyme. Trentham Monastery, we learn from Dugdale's "Monasticon," was founded by the daughter of a Saxon king—St. Werburgh—pronounced Warbush in olden times, and still so called by old-fashioned people. The site of the original nunnery is still preserved, and is apart from the palace. It is called Hanchurch; and there are some very venerable elms, that form three sides of a square, yet remaining. At the dissolution of monasteries the lands of Trentham were granted to the Duke of Suffolk, brother-in-law to King Henry. They afterwards passed into the hands of the Levesons, from whom the present possessor is descended. Another great estate in North Staffordshire is Alton Towers, the splendid seat of the Earls of Shrewsbury, in the rebuilding of which such vast sums have been spent in modern times. In this division also is the pleasant town of Uttoxeter, beautifully situated in the valley of the Dove. As its name implies, it was formerly a Roman station; and Roman remains are constantly found in the neighbourhood. In this town, Mary Howitt, the authoress, was born. Her earliest works are among her most popular, such as the "Forest

Minstrel," the "Desolation of Eyam," the "Seasons," and "Stories of English Life." She also published several translations from the Swedish of Frederica Bremer and the Danish of Andersen, and one in German, French, and English, called the "Child's Picture and Verse Book," which German critics have declared to be the best book of the kind ever written. William Howitt was a kindred spirit, and belonged to the same primitive religious body. His work on the "Rural Life of England" is interesting now, as showing how great a change has come over the country since the introduction of railways. In speaking of the English farmers—and he is understood to be speaking of them as he saw them in the richer parts of Derby and Staffordshire—he says: "There are few things which give one such a feeling of the prosperity of the country, as seeing the country people pour into a large town on a market-day. There they come, streaming along all the roads that lead to it from the wide country round. The footpaths are filled with a hardy and homely succession of pedestrians, men and women, with their baskets on their arms, containing their butter, eggs, apples, mushrooms, walnuts, nuts, elderberries, blackberries, bundles of herbs, young pigeons, fowls, or whatever happens to be in season.

"There are boys and girls, too, similarly loaded, and also with baskets of birds' nests in spring, cages of young birds and old birds, baskets of tame rabbits, and bunches of cowslips, primroses, and all kinds of flowers and country productions imaginable. The carriage road is equally alive with people riding and driving along; farmers and country gentlemen, country clergymen and parish overseers, and various other personages, drawn to the market-town by some real or imagined business, are rattling forward on horseback or on spring-carts," etc. Now this is nearly all changed. Hardly any pedestrians bring goods to market, and the bulk of what is brought comes by rail. Still we see something of the old style yet in such places as Chester or Shrewsbury. If any one will take his stand at the North-Gate or Fore-Gate on a Saturday morning in Chester, he will see country carts, mingled with cattle-dealers' and butchers' shandries, and here and there a keeper with a couple of setters or a game-bag; and, as they form groups in the ancient streets, the scenes are worthy of the pencil of Prout or Cattermole. The *menu* of a respectable farmhouse in those days I read with astonishment in Howitt's book. He says: "Let us just glance at the routine of good fellowship in one day, such as is seen in farmhouses where there is plenty,

and yet no great pretence to gentility." The farmer is supposed to ask a few friends in an ordinary way to dinner during a lull in the harvesting or haymaking. Rightly enough, he speaks of the "old-fashioned chimney-corners of the true projecting-beamed and seated construction still remaining;" and, for that matter, I am quite prepared to show that the internal architecture he describes is the best suited to our climate. But the advantages the bucolics of the second quarter of the present century enjoyed are startling. They seem to have made a substantial breakfast on the occasion of one of his visits (Mr. Howitt says he knows numbers of farms such as he describes), and after breakfast to have taken a stroll on general principles; and, at ten or eleven, more bucolics come in from a distance, and sit down to lunch—"a boiled ham, a neat's tongue, a piece of cold beef, fowls, and beef-steak pie; tarts, bread and cheese, and coffee for the ladies, and fine old ale for the gentlemen." A hearty lunch is described; and in fact, though these seem only to be regarded as trifles before the serious business commences, they appear to have become convivial over it, though they all declare they have only just had breakfast. They leave at last for the inspection of the farm, after being warned by the hostess that dinner is at one! and Mr.

Howitt declares that it was customary on such occasions to commence again with vigorous appetites to "such pieces of roast beef, veal, and lamb; such hams and turkeys and geese; such game and pies of pigeons, with other things equally good, with vegetables of all kinds in season." A list is appended, as also an amazing description of the dessert and wines. One is almost tempted to ask if this is from Mr. Howitt's "Recollections" of the "Arabian Nights," or his disjointed remembrances of a dinner he had recently left, certainly not at a farmhouse. Still, there is the passage, in a volume published in 1838—"About this time, and before and after, a Parliamentary Committee used to sit, on an average, every seven years, on 'Agricultural Distress.'" There seems to be little difficulty, if Mr. Howitt's narrative approaches anything like the facts of the case, in believing that a committee of some kind would be required. But would not Guy's or Bartholomew's Hospital have afforded a better field to select the members from than the House of Commons?

Burton-on-Trent is an old manufacturing and market town, pleasantly situated on the left bank of the Trent, and the country by which it is surrounded is extremely beautiful. Its bridge across the Trent, of thirty-six arches, is of very great length. Though Burton is

principally known for its malt and hop manufactures, it has many historical and antiquarian associations. The breweries of Burton are of course the most celebrated in the world, and interesting chapters might be written upon Bass, or Allsopp, or Ind, Coope, and Co. The smallest individual of these firms who can be called one of the "Co." has his way in life pretty well smoothed for him, and the "rough places have been made straight in the desert." But it is a mistake to suppose that the brewing is confined to two or three firms. There must be at least twenty breweries there; and all of them, it is alleged by those whose opinion would be valuable on such a subject, brew ale of more or less excellence. The secret of the Burton ale is said to be that the water is more strongly imbued with the soluble parts of feldspar than in other places, and this assists its brewing powers; indeed, artificial means have been used to bring the water in other places to the same chemical conditions, though such devices have only been attended with partial success. The chemical conditions of wine may be arrived at exactly. There is no unknown substance in Château Lafitte that is beyond the reach of the chemist's test; but if an imitation were produced, fulfilling each condition, it would be most undesirable to celebrate a birthday

upon it, however discreetly. On the following morning any one would be persuaded of the comparative bliss of the State of Maine.

But Burton has other attractions: there are the remains of an ancient abbey here, near the old church, and these have yet considerable interest; and the mighty stacks of empty casks that rise in mountains along the banks of the Trent occupy the ground where old monks used to grow fruit and pulse. How they would have been scandalised at such a sight, any one who sees these vast masses for the first time would be able to tell. Standing at some little distance, each individual hogshead looks like a pebble in a gravel heap, and it is only when we remember its actual size that we can form any judgment of the vastness of the mound. The road from Tutbury to Burton forms the eastern boundary of Needwood Forest, and a bridge over the Dove at Tutbury takes us into Derbyshire, not far from the pleasant town of Melbourne, already described.[1] The bridge over the Trent was built originally almost at the same time as the abbey, or at any rate within the same century, and it attests the importance of the abbey and its resources; for much of the labour was doubtless what is called in some parts

[1] See *ante*, p. 116.

of England "boon work," or "bound work," and paid for in remission of services, or perhaps in indulgence.

Burton Abbey held large estates in the district known as Needwood Forest, a hilly region that may be said to terminate with the beautiful valley of the Dove on the east and with Abbots Bromley on the west. Abbots Bromley was one of the possessions of Burton, and the market-place shown on the next page is of great antiquity; though, from several indications, I should judge that the fine old canopy occupies the site of a much more ancient market-cross. The square is roomy and pleasant, and there are some good dwellings round it; the black-and-white country inn is exceedingly picturesque from any point of view, and so beautiful are the surrounding landscapes that this old town must often have tempted a wayfarer to settle down in its liberties. The canopied market-place might, as far as outward appearance is concerned, be dated back to a period before the dissolution of monasteries; and we can form from it some idea of the different conditions of marketing in old days. True it is that it serves for the present times, and that others, like Malmesbury and Chichester, have adapted themselves to modern requirements; but that is only because they were there, and a strong conservative feeling prevented the introduction

of enclosed markets, as being innovations. We can also see that when these open market-places were built, the habits of the people were much more simple. The market-cart came once in each week, and when they

MARKET-CROSS, ABBOTS BROMLEY.

had disposed of their goods, they closed up their baskets and went home. The viands of those days were vegetables and bacon and eggs, where now we should expect to see three courses at least, and perhaps

an *entrée;* that is to say, among small country squires, who were in about the same position as our modern middle classes. The more delicate viands were required for the abbeys and monasteries which, it has been asserted, at one time owned half the wealth of England: and it is not impossible that this estimate is within the mark. There is a well-known brass in Abbots Bromley Church which collectors sometimes make a pilgrimage to take a rubbing of; and, as there is no public conveyance, it may be well to remark that the nearest station is Rugeley. The walk through Blythfield Park from here is perfectly delightful, and the owners have thrown its many broad acres open as a thoroughfare for generations. Bagot Park almost adjoins it, and is now also open to the public. It contains some of the finest oaks in England, and lies within the territory of the same proprietor. Here it may be interesting to those who are apt to take all they read in guide-books for gospel to narrate a circumstance that caused the writer some trouble. An admirable and very cheap series of county guides is published by a certain firm; that for the district now under review is generally useful and interesting, but there are just a few startling errors in it. "In the year 1322, a battle was fought on Burton Bridge between Edward II. and the Earl of

Lancaster, when the former gained a decisive victory." It must have been the Battle of Boroughbridge that is alluded to here, for that occurred in the year 1322; and I have searched in vain for one at Burton Bridge, which is some hundred miles distant. It is, as Disraeli in his "Curiosities of Literature" says, "a very dangerous thing to quote second-hand;" and he produces a few instances of the irregularity it may lead to, little thinking, indeed, that another generation would find flaws in his own quotations. But this error is repeated —or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, originated—in Nightingale's "Stafford." Haziness, however, in the "Chronicles of Burton" would almost seem to be chronic, or else how could we find such an authority as Sir William Dugdale at fault, and that curiously? He seems to have discovered a charter of King Edred's, by which he granted certain lands to one Wulfric, in the year 949; and these lands were situated in Burgetune—a word which one seems to think would about hit off the spelling of Burton at that time; and at once this careful antiquary came to the conclusion that Wulfric was Wulfric Spott, who gave a large estate to the abbey, and he mentions the boundaries of the property. It so happens, however, that these boundaries correspond with those of another Burton,

Burton-on-the-Water in Gloucestershire, and they are still preserved in the Evesham register.

According to Eardswicke, the buildings of Burton Abbey must at one time have been very superb. The church was 228 feet in length and 52 in breadth; and the cloisters, which stood on the south side, covered a quarter of an acre of ground. The ruins of the porter's lodge can be traced yet, or they could be until recently, in a smith's forge. Abbots Bromley would seem to have come into possession of Burton Abbey about the year 1185; and it changed its name from Paget's Bromley, not—as a popular work, though now indeed fifty years old, says—because there was an abbey built in the neighbourhood, but because it was an appendage of Burton. Formerly it was a place of importance, and had rights and charities that have fallen into disuse. Dr. Plot mentions a singular custom that prevailed at one time, and was called the "Hobby-horse Dance." It consisted of a person riding through the town, or rather dancing, on a flat horse, made of board, suspended from his shoulders. In his hand he carried a bow which was pierced, and an arrow that was stopped by a shoulder fitted into it. This he kept drawing, and it made a snapping kind of noise that kept time with the music. Other individuals followed dancing, and they

carried deers' heads painted on the foreheads with the arms of families in the neighbourhood. There was a pot attached to this hobby-horse dance that was kept by two or three of the principal inhabitants in turn, and into it collections were placed for cakes and ale; and after the amount of the cakes and ale was defrayed, the remainder was applied to the repairs of the church and for the poor. But this custom was not confined to Abbots Bromley; we find hobby-horse money frequently mentioned in the church books of Stafford, and it continued in force until the Civil Wars of the Stuarts. At Stafford, Sir Simon Degge quaintly says: "They had something of the kind to get money for the repair of the church at Stafford, every common councilman there collecting money from his friends, and whosoever brought in the greatest sum to the hobby-horse was considered as the man of best credit, so that they strove who should most improve his interest: and it was accounted for at Christmas." Stafford is not an old-fashioned town; even in Nightingale's "Beauties of England and Wales," which was written in 1813, it seems to have presented few attractions to the antiquary. It is principally since that time, however, that havoc has been made in country towns. It is even then described as a squarely-built, compact town. Like so

many other towns, it was formerly walled; but it never was a strong place, and Sir William Brereton took it for the Parliamentary army in 1643 with the loss of a single man; but not a trace of the walls now remains, though part of one of the gates was standing this century. Nightingale says that the system of "Borough English" prevailed in Stafford, by which the youngest son succeeded to property in preference to the elder ones, and conjectures that the cause was that they were not so able to provide for themselves.

CHAPTER X.

CAMBRIDGE, ELY, AND PETERBOROUGH.

Cambridge—Queen's College—Cambridge butter—Isle of Ely and eels—Duck decoys — Ely Cathedral and monks, means of subsistence — Hereward, brother of the Earl of Mercia — Alen de Walsingham — March, and the Fen lands under mist — Peterborough and its early history—Spoiled by the Danes—The superior dignity of Peterborough Cathedral — Catherine of Aragon interred here — Dissolution of Monasteries—Mary Queen of Scots—Bishop's Palace—Tithebarn—Kettering Church—A Northampton election—Country inns again.

CAMBRIDGE, quite independently of its University, is an admirable example of a venerable country town. It has a more ancient and rustic look than Oxford; and on market-days we see many broad-wheeled waggons of old fashioned build, and farmers of the most bucolic appearance. One notices also the narrow ancient wynds and entries, and the old gables and massive chimneys. The Universities are not so picturesque, with one solitary exception, and for venerable beauty Oxford has nothing to compare with it. This

exception, of course, is Queen's. It is called Queen's from having been founded by Queen Margaret of Anjou, the consort of the unhappy Henry VI. We cannot help feeling more than compassion for a king who was so unsuited to his times, and who preferred, as an old historian says, "peace to war, and honesty before profit." The beautiful words that Shakespeare has put in his mouth are probably characteristic. He leaves the terrible field of Towton to the more congenial care of his wife, and finds time to lament his fate :—

> Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade
> To shepherds looking on their silly sheep
> Than doth a rich embroidered canopy
> To kings ?

In the third act of "Henry VI." he speaks with lofty dignity to the two gamekeepers who captured him, and who seem to have been much above what we should have expected from a keeper of that period. Probably they were hunters (to use an American word) for an abbey. But he shows his innate superiority in his speech beginning—

> My crown is in my heart, not on my head,
> Or decked with diamonds and Indian stones.

The founding of a college seems more like the act of

Henry than of his overbearing wife, and it is worthy of note that it occurred the year after the death of Cardinal Beaufort, when, the restraint even of that evil man being removed, Margaret and Suffolk ruled England their own way—or misruled it, perhaps we should say. Henry was a mere nullity, and he probably was allowed to amuse himself by initiating the scheme. The Queen must have been well occupied with Suffolk in transferring Maine and Anjou to her father. Henry had already founded the magnificent King's College, but it was for his nephew, Henry VII., to find the funds to finish it. We can almost fancy there is a slight appearance of French architecture in the view shown here; it certainly seems more like the French style than we commonly see in England. The rising abruptly out of the river, and the irregular features, give it a foreign aspect; and it is an extremely valuable example of unchanged fifteenth-century architecture. King's College Chapel — which, whatever fastidious critics may say, is a noble building—just fills in the distance; and the barges that are driven with long oars through college grounds and past the fine front shown here, mingle the active trade in corn and coals and timber that is carried on with King's Lynn very romantically with the academic surroundings.

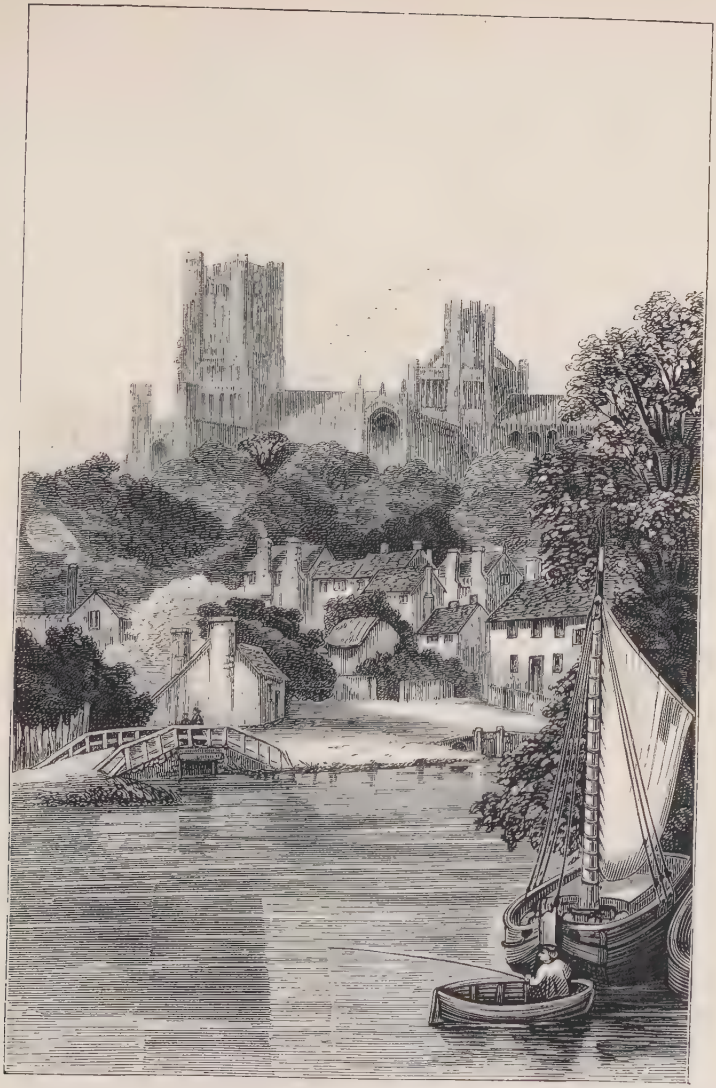
CAMBRIDGE, FROM THE CAM.

HANOVER SQUARE

In many respects, Cambridge affords an exceptionally good example of an old country town, as it supplies the Universities, and derives its principal sources of wealth from them; so that, as one may say, it stays at home. Beyond its aspect as an old country town, it hardly concerns the present series, though its history and surroundings are so delightful. Common report says that a school of learning was established here in the seventh century, upon the model of some in France, by Sigebert, King of the East Angles, and that it was improved by Edward the Elder; but a pleasant and perhaps true tradition says that in the year 1109, or twenty-two years after the Norman Conquest, the abbot of the lonely Crowland sent learned monks to his manor at Cottenham; and as they were versed in the sciences, they travelled on to Cambridge, where they found scholars only too willing to give attention to their discourse; they also noticed that these scholars were living very much after the fashion of the students of Orleans; and after this visitation the University buildings were commenced. The oldest building actually standing among the colleges is St. Peter's, which was founded during the lengthened reign of Henry III.; and Queen's is computed to come about the eighth on the list, as far as years go. But it is the

most venerable in appearance, owing to its having escaped any attempt at recent restoration or rebuilding.

The tradesmen of Cambridge are pretty well occupied in supplying the University, and it may be said to constitute the principal stay for their industry ; indeed, the demands the Colleges make upon them must be nearly enough to keep them, regardless of times, fairly busy. We continually hear of Cambridge butter being sold by the yard. Its excellence is always admitted, and the curiosity of its merchandise is never forgotten. The fact is, that the selling by length is only a convenience for the colleges. A pound of butter is rolled out into a stick a yard in length, and this is easily divided into sections for college use. Cambridge sausages are in great favour, not only at the seat of learning, but all the kingdom over, and the flat lands supply unlimited quantities of the best poultry, and ducks, and eggs. The surroundings of Cambridge may be said to be more unsophisticated than those of Oxford, and the rustics that come in with country stuff are more picturesque. In Queen's College there are courts of great beauty. The principal court, which contains a large sundial made by Sir Isaac Newton, Erasmus Court, and Walnut-tree Court, will never be forgotten. The benevolent intentions of Richard III.



ELY, FROM THE CAM.

in confiscating the estates of De Vere, Earl of Oxford, and giving them to this college, were frustrated by Henry VII. when he superseded him on the throne. Independently, however, of Cambridge and Ely, there are other towns of interest, such as Chatteris, March, and Chesterton, with its remains of an old castle, formerly a seat of the priors of Barnwell. Chesterton, however, is almost a suburb of Cambridge.

About ten miles to the south-east, again, is the exceedingly picturesque little town of Linton, with its ancient thatched houses, and great chimneys, and market gardens.

The Cam, which is shown opposite, after leaving Cambridge, runs through a fenny country to Ely, where the Cathedral is the delight of a traveller. The hotel accommodation in this city is not equal to Cambridge, nor, indeed, is it likely to be, for the latter town is resorted to by wealthy men from all parts of England. Still, one seems to think that it might, in this respect, rival Peterborough, which it certainly does not. There is always something romantic about Ely—the Isle of Ely, as it is called. Formerly, it was spelled Eely, and Smiles gives currency to a statement that it was so called from the abundance and excellence of the eels that were caught around it. This becomes more

probable than at first might appear, if we consider that rents were sometimes paid in eels. Fresh-water fish took the place of the more delicate productions of the sea in old times, excepting in places near the coast, and, as in Canada, they were smoked and cured for winter. One sees in cottages in the upper waters of the St. Lawrence even such fish as pike cured and hung up. These used to be called stock-fish, and the word often occurs in old authors: as, for example, Stefano says to Trinculo, "I'll turn my mercy out of doors, and make a stock-fish of thee." It would require Brillat-Savarin or Col. Vivian to make tolerable a pike that has been cured, but eels, as they are prepared by the French Canadians, are very delicious. They salt them slightly and then smoke them, and hang them in a draught.

All the islands in the great inland sea appear to have been settled by recluses. They had nothing to look out upon but "a sea in winter without waves, and in summer a dreary mud swamp." Each island had its duck decoys, and the wild fowl abounded to such an extent that 3000 ducks have been taken by one of these in a day. This would probably be just as they packed together before spring; but the estimate, though it is believed to be reliable, probably included

teal-ducks. Stilts were used by the inhabitants of the Fens, as they are now in the low lands of Brittany and Normandy, to spy out game; and the Fenlanders were, as might be expected, subject to all kinds of low fevers and ague. Quinine was not procurable, and their condition was deplorable indeed. Chatteris, Soham, St. Ives, and other places that are now considerable country towns, appear as little islands in the sea where all now is rich farming land. The original intention was to build Ely Cathedral about a mile away from its present site, and the foundations of a cathedral were actually laid at a place called Cratendon; but there can be no comparison as to the sites. The old design was abandoned, and the present structure was built. It was always regarded with great reverence by English monarchs in early days. Canute used to keep the festival of the Purification at Ely with his queen, Sunna, and Edward the Confessor received his education within its walls. His brother, Alfred, ended his unhappy life there after being deprived of sight by the command of King Harold. The part that was taken by the Isle of Ely in holding out against the conquering arms of William I. must always command our admiration. He had quite subdued the kingdom, and reduced its wealth to a fourth of what it was

under the Saxon kings. His sword and fire depopulated the land between the Humber and the Tees, and a hundred thousand valuable lives were sacrificed in a very short space of time after the battle of Hastings was over, and many nobles and knights fled to Ely for safety. Here they set William at defiance, secure among the waters of the Fens. A journey of ten or twelve miles in such canoes as they could make on the banks of the marshy sea would be required to hunt out the malcontents; and here the celebrated army of Ely held company with the abbots and monks —"revelry" it has been sometimes called, but one fears that, if there was not exactly *res angusta domi*, the means of riotous living were few enough. Still, there were plenty of resources at hand to supply necessaries. Breechloaders or even cap-guns they certainly had not, but they doubtless had other means of procuring the wild ducks that swarmed over the vast area of marsh by which they were surrounded, and we all know that gunpowder drives a wild duck farther than it does any other fowl. Quieter means of capture may have allowed the birds to settle and breed in vast hordes, and the worshipful knights and squires and carls had nothing else to do than to capture them during their sojourn at Ely. Eels, pike, and perch also

abounded in the fens, and netting was understood then very nearly as well as it is now. The Isle of Ely itself afforded grain and milk to some extent, and, by singular clemency or oversight, the monks were allowed to retain possession of their estates that lay on the dry land outside the waste of waters, so that resources could, to some extent, be transported from time to time as opportunity offered. Dovecots also were plentiful, and pigeons took long flights to feeding-grounds, and returned with their spoils in their maws. And the monks might be fairly trusted to attend to the cellar. There was, doubtless, a goodly stock of wine laid in during less troublesome times, which had not deteriorated by age. The picture, indeed, is not unpleasing, and the mingling together of clericals and laity cannot but have improved each class. Lysons says that during all the time the earls and knights were entertained at the refectory of the Abbey of Ely ; the earls sitting at the high table with the abbot, the knights and monks at the other tables alternately, every man with his target and lance hanging near him on the wall, to be ready for immediate action.

The able and intrepid Hereward was the life of this singular colony, and always seemed full of resource. He was a younger brother of the Earl of Mercia, and

devoted to the Saxon cause. At one time, when the island and lake were invested by the conquering army of William, the latter commenced making a road from Aldreth for himself and his army to reach Ely. The marsh was only twelve miles wide at the point, but the road was not constructed on scientific principles, and it gave way while the greater portion of his army were marching over it, causing fearful loss of life in the deep fen. The king afterwards mustered another army at Aldreth, and compelled the fishermen to collect immense stacks of brushwood, which, of course, would afford the foundation for a fine road. Hereward disguised himself as a fisherman, and was the most active worker in the king's employ; but he managed to set fire to the vast pile, and escaped to the Isle, where his fellows were. Shortly after this the Earl of East Angles raised an army to fight the king, from whom he had received much kindness; but he was joined by the islanders, and the King did what we wonder he had forborne doing at an earlier period—he confiscated the estates of the monastery that lay on the mainland; and while Hereward was away leading an expedition at some distance for foraging, the monks gave 1000 marks to have their lands restored, and allowed the king's troops to enter their stronghold. Hereward never submitted;

but, though we should not expect such clemency, he lost neither his life nor his liberty, nor even his lands. These continued till comparatively recent times in the hands of his descendants, who founded the families of Rullos, Fitzgilbert, and Wake.

The interior of Ely Cathedral is very beautiful, and it is a perfect model of construction. The octagonal tower and lantern were commenced in 1321, and completed in twenty-two years. They were designed and carried out by one architect, Alen de Walsingham and certainly they show him to have been a man of consummate skill and boldness of design. Britton has truly pointed out that he was influenced by the same ideas as Wren when he designed the dome of St. Paul's, and adds that Walsingham's idea was not only prior, but bolder and finer. "The additional resistance which the form of building afforded against the thrust or pressure of vast masses of masonry tending towards one centre" is doubtless a proof of grand construction, and must not be confused with the principles upon which flying buttresses are constructed, though the description reads like the same. These flying buttresses are picturesque, and bring out charming light and shadow along a façade, but they are weak in construction, and only do their allotted work by heavy inert resistance.

The octagonal lantern at Ely is built where a square tower used to stand, but this tower fell down in 1320, through the inequality of the pressure. In the following year Walsingham, who was sub-prior, and a consummate engineer, commenced the rebuilding; and if any one will make even the most superficial examination of the interior, he will be at once struck with the greatness of the designer. The groinings, which are very heavy and massive, spring at a vast height from the tops of clustered columns, and support each other, forming by their own weight as they lean together a solid foundation on which the graceful lantern rests. The principal arches are lofty, but the others are lower, and the space is filled in with acutely pointed windows filled with delicate tracery. The whole building is a splendid example of the lightest and strongest construction in stone-work that the kingdom can boast of. St. Mary's or the Trinity Church of Ely is a grand specimen of architecture. The interior is one mass of fine carving, and one wonders more and more how such gorgeous examples of architecture could have found a home in such a dreary waste as it was when they were built.

About fifteen miles from Ely and as many from Peterborough lies the prosperous little town of March. The drained fens around it are very fertile and produce

splendid crops. There is a good market-place, and a brisk trade is carried on in corn and timber and coal. Agricultural implements are made here, and baskets, and a few bricks. There is a fine old church; and if we ascend the tower early on a summer's morning in hot weather, the scene is very remarkable. A vast stretch of country lies mapped out at our feet in all directions. A dense mist has risen during the night, but it cannot ascend the rarefied atmosphere for more than a few yards; for that height, however, all is invisible; the tops of trees can just be seen, and here and there is one, taller than its neighbour, the upper branches of which are clearly defined. For the rest, we might be looking over a mighty plain of cotton-wool. Above this the towers of Ely rise in a rose-coloured gray on the south, looking almost as if the towers formed a part of the sunrise, with Peterborough Cathedral in cooler tints far away in the west; between these all is chaos. The farms, the broad-wheeled waggons, and the flocks and herds, are shut out of view by a dense covering as completely as if they were on the other side of the globe, though we know that the sun, which has risen above its level, will disperse it all in a couple of hours; cattle will be cooling themselves in ponds and watercourses, and butterflies will be settling on marsh-foxtails.

The city of Peterborough is full of interesting associations and legends, though some seem to be a little apocryphal. Five hundred years before the Conquest a monastery is believed to have existed here, and twelve successive abbots enjoyed the undisturbed dignity of the foundation and the revenues from the broad lands that belonged to it. These are supposed —perhaps correctly—to have covered about two hundred miles. The foundations of the old building seem to have been very solid indeed, if we can rely upon old authors. The stones were so large that it is said those which were used for the lower stories were brought with great difficulty to their places by eight yokes of oxen. All was prosperous till the old tale was repeated, and the incorrigible Danes once more marauded in to plunder the peaceful recluses. The history of these plundering expeditions is one weary repetition, as far as we can make out of the dusky chronicles, of pure and simple piracy. No quarrel was ever pretended, and the return of the robbers, whenever they could raise sufficient funds for an expedition, was as surely to be expected by the island monks as the water-lilies on their fens in summer. We read of one of these attacks being so disastrous that not only the abbot and monks but the country-people who sought

refuge in the monastery were slaughtered, and for nearly a century the colony of recluses was a desert. But the sanctity attaching to the spot was too great to allow it to remain in this condition longer, and the Bishops of Winchester and Canterbury, assisted by King Edgar and his queen, refounded it with great splendour. For some years it enjoyed comparative rest and quiet, till the terrible cry rose over the fens that the Danes were coming, and fire and sword and plunder were again the order of the day. The robbers took all the gold and silver treasures to Denmark; and, with an amount of piety one would hardly have looked for in such a quarter, the teeth and arms and other relics of saints were transported there too. After this we hear of no more Danish troubles. William the Conqueror had to be reckoned with, and all fears of the marauders passed away. So great had been the reverence in which Peterborough was held, that it was almost vice-papal. Kings, bishops, and abbots took off their shoes as they entered the door, and the members of the monastery received almost public honours wherever they went. An accidental fire in 1116 consumed nearly all the monastery buildings, and was happily the last calamity in its long and eventful career. In two years after, the reigning abbot, John

de Salisbury, commenced a new Minster, which is the origin and foundation of the present Cathedral. There was a grand opening, and one precious relic which had escaped the cupidity of the Danes—the arm of St. Oswald—was exhibited. King Stephen afterwards made a pilgrimage to see it, and was so delighted that he made it an offering of his ring, conferring at the same time many privileges upon the church. Catherine of Aragon was buried here. Her last moments, as recorded in "Henry VIII."—

> Embalm me,
> Then lay me forth; altho' unqueen'd, yet like
> A queen, and daughter of a king, inter me.
> I can no more—

were spent at Kimbolton. This mansion, which has been in turn the property of the Bohuns, Staffords, and Wingfields, now belongs to the Duke of Manchester, and is not much more than twenty miles distant. Queen Catherine was interred between the two pillars on the north side of the choir, next to the altar.

On the last day of November, in the year 1539, the fatal inventory was taken of Peterborough that heralded the Dissolution. The revenues were enormous —£1721 was the estimate of them, and that in those parts and in those times would represent a sum equal

to about £40,000 of our money. The abbot seems to have been of a more tractable nature than some of his fellows, and acquiesced with good grace in the new arrangement, securing the liberal annual allowance of £260 : 13 : 4. Within two years the monastery was converted into a cathedral, and the government was entrusted to a bishop, a dean, and six prebendaries, whose jurisdiction extended over the county of Northampton. But there was another royal funeral here, and the grave was dug by the same sexton, whose portrait is preserved in the cathedral. This was of Mary Queen of Scots, who was hurried to Peterborough after the execution at Fotheringay Castle, and whose evil but unhappy career must always command some of our sympathy. The execution took place on Sunday, July 30, and on the following day the body was committed to a vault that had been prepared for it, near the Bishop's throne. It was immediately closed, without any religious service, and some of the nobility who attended the vast throng that accompanied her remains to the Cathedral, and were of Scotch ancestry, refused to enter the church or be present at the interment. The Dean, of course, read the service, which was not the burial ; and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Lincoln, whose discourse was a model

of caution. "Let us give thanks," he said, "for the happy dissolution of the high and mighty Princess Mary Queen of Scotland and Dowager of France, of

PETERBOROUGH MARKET-PLACE, FROM THE CATHEDRAL.

whose life and death at this time I have not much to say, as I was not acquainted with the one and I was not present at the other." The body was not allowed

to remain long here, for, twenty years after, James I. ordered the remains to be transferred to Westminster.

Peterborough Cathedral is almost surrounded by beautiful monastic buildings, and any one will remember well his first ramble round them, and the surprise at finding such extensive remains there. The entrance gateway to the precincts shown here is Norman, and probably coeval with the rebuilding of the Cathedral after the fire which occurred in 1116. This fire was believed and is chronicled to have arisen as a judgment upon an abbot and his servant, who seem to have spent some time in attempting to light a fire when the fuel was not sufficiently dry; and the abbot, when his lungs were fairly exhausted, shocked the attendant by saying, "I wish the devil would come and blow it now." The gateway is very strong, and defended by a portcullis; for though the Danes never troubled them more, the times were too insecure to trust to.

Behind the spot where this gateway is sketched is the picturesque entrance to the Bishop's Palace, a building that has many claims to antiquity and is full of interest: it is proposed to connect at some time with the present series a work on the Ancient Bishops' Palaces of England. Many notes are already taken, and though the remains are very scattered, they contain

examples of the most perfect domestic Gothic in the kingdom. The architects who designed the cathedrals would certainly be employed on the palaces, and the

OLD TITHEBARN, PETERBOROUGH (*circa* 1250).

best architects would be retained for that work too. The mansion-houses, if we examine them, unless connected with some monastic building, are very inferior in design.

The Tithebarn is hardly a mile distant from the Cathedral, and has, perhaps, scarcely any equal in the kingdom as an original ancient barn ; it still retains its uses as a storehouse, though it is attached to a farm now. Tithe, of course, is a tenth of anything, and Shakespeare uses it in this sense several times. Tennyson also says : "Nine tithes of time, face-flatterers, and backbiters are the same." There are various kinds of tithes. The medial or mixed tithes are such as do not arise immediately out of the proceeds of land, but from the stock fed on it, such as calves, lambs, or chickens, or milk, or farmyard poultry : and this is the most objectionable of all in the eyes of the farmer. A clever picture appeared on the walls of a recent Academy exhibition of a priest in Spain leaving an old farmhouse with poultry and wine slung over a mule. A damsel meets him in a great state of indignation ; she stands erect, with her back to the wall of the narrow entry ; but though silent, she evidently shows her disdain of him. Then there were personal tithes, or the profits of labour, which do not seem to have ever been regularly enforced ; and prædial tithes, such as cannot be separated from the ground. These consisted of such productions as grain, wood, fruits, etc., and it was for the storage of such productions as

these that the fine old range of barns, which must be about 600 years old, was constructed. Indeed, one is a little shocked at first to see the farmers go about their work in it with such indifference, and with no feeling of awe at all, and is apt to say, "Has this fellow no feeling of his business?—he sings at grave-making."

The county of Northampton, if we leave the Fen counties on the east and travel south-west, is perfectly delightful. From Kingscliff we go up a beautiful valley, literally one succession of parks and the surroundings that are sure to pertain to them. The late Marquis of Cardigan's place, Deepdene, is among them, and is not surpassed in England for sylvan scenery; there are swelling lawns, magnificent forest trees, and a park abounding with deer. Within a few miles we enter the amazing avenues pertaining to Boughton, one of the many seats of the Duke of Buccleuch. The trees round this place are especially imposing, and the branches are thrown out in forms of easy fantastic beauty which it is very difficult for an artist to imitate. The picturesque little town of Geddington contains one of the three Eleanor crosses that remain to us out of twelve, the nine others having, as it is believed, been purposely destroyed. There are still traditions

in an old-fashioned inn of very humble pretensions that a queen's body once rested there.

Kettering, with its grand old church, is the only town of any moment between Peterborough and Northampton. At the back of the screen which divides the north aisle from the chancel of this church are the figures of a man and woman, and four sons and four daughters, with the black-letter inscription, "Orate pro animos Willieme Burgis et Johanne Alice et Elisabeth uxorum ejus et animabus omnium benefactorum suorum. Amen." And the following quaint legend follows: "Who so redis mi name, shal have Gody's blessing, and our lady, and my wyfis do say the same." Kettering is about thirteen miles from Northampton, and a railroad will take us if we desire to make a pilgrimage to the wonderful Eleanor's cross at Geddington. There is no more beautiful sylvan walk in England, and the distance is only a pleasant one. Northampton, of course, deserves a separate notice of its own, and it would be impossible to do justice to it here. It may be mentioned in passing that it enjoyed a not very enviable Parliamentary reputation for years. One of the most memorable elections of England was fought out here, in the year 1768, when the nominees of Earls Spencer, Northampton, and Halifax did battle. The

cost to one of these gentlemen for his candidate was £100,000—which, be it remembered, was more than such a sum would be now, great even as that is ; and the expenses of the others were £150,000 each ! So that it is probable that the vote of each of the free and independent electors represented about £600, or a little under, though but very little. How appalled an election judge of the present day would be at anything approaching this ! Now, a single pound wrongly invested has been enough to unseat a candidate.

So many communications have reached me about hotels and hotel charges, that a few more remarks may not be out of the way. Generally speaking, the actual charges for breakfasts or dinners are not very unreasonable; though, of course, in very exclusive hotels, if we go into such places, we must expect to pay accordingly. Only once during the journeys which were made for the present series do I remember a case of overcharge, and this was at a very unpretending inn in a beautiful part of England, and in a country town that might have supported a good one. It was frequented by some few commercial travellers, and I was shown into their room where two very pleasant and intelligent gentlemen were sitting after the day's labours. The utmost the inn afforded was what was called a leg of mutton, but it

had seen better days. It had run the gauntlet of at least half a dozen before me, and some of them must have been at any rate creditably good trenchermen ; but, with two eggs and a penny roll, enough could be found on it to pass for what was called a lunch, though the case of the next comer would be deplorable to think of. I asked an ancient servitor, who seemed to be called waitress, or barmaid, or chambermaid, according to the duty she had to perform, what I should pay, and she soon brought in a folded paper, which she dropped on the table, and then disappeared with some alacrity, I thought, for one who could rejoice in probably sixty-five winters. When this document was unfolded, it was found to estimate the lunch at 4s. and a pint of ale at 1s. I rang the bell, and said the account was hardly a proper one, and asked her to bring in an amended one, and received a reply in due course that her mistress would see me. She "received" me in her parlour with as much dignity as the proprietor of a Clapham boarding-school would receive the wife of a solicitor, and asked me what I complained of in her charges. "You are not a commercial," she said. "No, unhappily, or else I am sure I should have fared better. Would you send this bill to a commercial?" "I make out my bills my own way ; and I wish you would just go to the

'Ship' or the 'Star and Garter,' and then see what their charges are." "My good lady, I know the 'Ship' and I know the 'Star and Garter' very well, and I know their charges. But this is not the 'Ship' nor yet the 'Star and Garter.'" "Mutton is eighteenpence a pound now, sir, and eggs are twopence each." "Well, I hardly think you can go to the best market. But I will tell you what I will do; I will give you half-a-crown, and you know very well that this is a shilling more than you would be glad to provide a better lunch for."

This amount was at once accepted in full—rather gladly, I thought, for a question as to the charges was never dreamt of. Still, this is exceptional, and as a very general rule I have little but praise for the entertainment of an English country inn. "Inn" is a word that has been used in preference to "hotel," as being not only more English, but as conveying an idea of a different establishment from the French house of entertainment, and a more comfortable one. As to the wine prices, that, as before said, is a different thing, and hotelkeepers stand in their own light. Here is a list of a few prices averaged from a number of moderate inns. Dinner sherry, 3s. per pint and 6s. per quart. Now, this is wine that costs about £40 sterling per butt at Xeres, and such as a wine merchant would supply at

12s. a gallon, if a quarter-cask or any larger quantity were required. This might be sold at 75 per cent advance, and then a pint would cost 1s. 9d., and at the same rate a quart would cost 3s. 6d. This would be a total revolution, of course, in hotel charges, but the first parties to profit by it would be the hotelkeepers. Again, take Amontillado, as it figures on wine-cards—which is good Manzanilla, costing £70 sterling per butt, in reality. This is put down at 4s. for pints and 8s. for quarts. Now, a wine merchant would sell this wine at 17s. 6d. per gallon, and that is 1s. 6d. per pint. Ninepence profit would only be 2s. 3d. for pints, and eighteenpence would be 4s. 6d. for quarts, or about half the price that the wine is now sold at, after allowing 50 per cent profit! Few persons now order wine at inns, even among those who might see such an article generally on their own tables. Wine merchants have kept pace with the times, but not so innkeepers. Claret is much more pronounced and more flagrant We paid 6s. for a bottle of this wine at a very old-fashioned hotel at Oxford, and the landlord cleared about 5s. 2d. by the transaction. It figures in bills at from 4s. per quart up to any price, and the generality of that at 4s. has cost, or at any rate could be procured for, 1s. 3d. Some of the railway hotels—notably those connected with the

branches of the Midland Railway—are beginning to set a better example, and one may order a pint of wine without necessarily feeling a misgiving.

Bedford and other old towns on the Fens are full of interest, and will in due time receive, it is hoped, proper attention.

NOTE.—The £40 and £70 alluded to on the former page are, I am told by wine merchants, a higher class of wines than innkeepers usually purchase, which makes the case against them all the stronger.

CHAPTER XI.

BOSTON, OLD AND NEW.

Boston — Bull-running — Connection between New and Old Boston — Resemblance of Boston to some towns in the Low Countries — Boston Market — Early trading in Boston — Origin of the name Boston — Height of Boston Stump — Boston dialect — Grammar School — John Cotton — The Puritans — Cotton memorial — Return of the Stuarts — Bunyan in Bedford jail.

To a visitor from the shores of Europe the names of American towns are not a little surprising. All the lands of Homer, and nearly all the cities of Scripture, seem to be pressed into the service of the guide-books and time-tables, and sometimes the traveller may almost doubt, when the name of the station is called out, whether he be not waking from a reverie and travelling in the old country. Nearly all this chapter will be occupied by Boston and its associations, and many readers may be surprised to see how much our own Boston is associated with the city of the States, nor will any one be surprised at the erratic wanderings

of a letter which was posted from Chester to a friend in Boston, and wandered free of expense twice across the Atlantic Ocean because "Linc." was not inscribed on the envelope. Boston is easily approached through Stamford—the town which was seen by Nicholas Nickleby on the cold winter night when he made a dreary journey with the amiable Mr. Squeers. The churches that rose "dark and frowning" above the snow were St. Michael's, St. Mary's, St. George's, All Saints', and St. John's. There are many remains of fourteenth-century architecture in Stamford, and traces of the Grey Friars, the Black Friars, and the Austin Friars. There is a curious account of an old custom in Stamford given by so careful an antiquary as Britton, and it was in existence in 1807, when he wrote. It is called Bull-running, and tradition says that William, Earl of Warren, in the reign of King John, standing on his castle wall, saw two bulls fighting—as indeed bulls will often fight—and a butcher who owned one, set his dogs upon the animal belonging to him to get it away, but they chased it to Stamford, and were joined by a number of other dogs, who followed it with so much vigour that a large multitude assembled in the streets, and were charged upon by the bull, and some of them fared badly. The episode was so congenial to the

tastes of the nobleman who had witnessed it from the beginning, that he gave the meadows where the entertainment commenced to the butchers of Stamford after the first crop was taken off, on condition of their supplying a bull annually six weeks before Christmas to run the gauntlet, hotly pursued by townsmen ; but when Britton wrote in 1807, the proceedings had so far fallen in interest and vigour that no extra duty was entailed on the coroner. This is the land of the early settlers in New England. They left not from want, or because they were tired of their country. It was the incorrigible persecutions of the Stuarts that drove men who were as truly and loyally English as any that ever heard the lark carol, into a distant and then a desert land, to become in the fulness of time the founders of the United States.

The traditions of Boston are intimately connected with America, and the inhabitants will always listen with delight to the tales of those who have been there, and can describe what perhaps they would obtain easy absolution for having called their "daughter." They have always a list of visitors from America who may have come to see the original town, and who rarely search in vain for the reminiscences or the tombs of their forefathers. These are found not only in the

grand old church of St. Botolph, but in the neighbouring parishes of Leverton, Bennington, Butterwick, Freiston, or Shirbeck—and it is curious to remark how Boston names have crossed the ocean to New Boston. There are, for example, in Liverpool not more than six Everetts, out of nearly half a million of inhabitants, and not a single address appears in the Liverpool directory of Cushing or Frothingham ; yet these names, familiar in America, are common in Lincolnshire, so that it is no manufactured ancestry,

Quis genus Æneadûm, quis Trojæ nesciat urbem.

And when John Cotton, after ministering some twenty years in blameless life at the church of St. Botolph, fled in disguise from the persecutions of Laud, he spoke of joining those of his fellow-countrymen whom he well knew, that had gone before him, and those that would follow after. A far more slender thread has sufficed to make a family tree out of recent additions to English aristocracy than Boston men might find in Lancashire.

If we take also a railway guide and look at the stations round Boston (America), we find the same recollections of their old homes preserved. We have Lynn, Beverley, Ipswich, Woburn, and Billerica, with many others that show that the pilgrim fathers and all

their co-patriots, in crossing the ocean, changed their skies but not their affections.

Old Boston is a delightful town, and it would well repay a visit even as a pleasant trip to an American, especially as he may take in Lincoln with its gigantic cathedral on the way. It is only a few hours' distance from Liverpool, and there are many choices of routes; but the Manchester, Lincoln, and Sheffield Railway has probably the greatest attraction for an American tourist.

There is a singular resemblance in Boston to some of the best cities in Holland, and the tower of the church is said to have been copied from Antwerp. However this may be, any one who walks up the wharves and banks of the Wytham will not fail to recognise the resemblance to a city in the Low Countries. The narrow river is lined on each side with tall old-fashioned warehouses, and these find their way into unexpected parts of the town. There are red-tiled roofs similar to those we find in Rotterdam and Antwerp, and some of these have introduced those gable-lights that help to make even warehouses picturesque. Not a few have their gables to the streets, and the low stories and small windows that crowd over each other do in reality indicate a more economic style of

architecture than the sumptuous warehouses of modern days; for I have often noticed in Montreal, a city that combines the old and modern America, that the warehouses which the French Canadians of the last century built are far more fitted for the requirements of the country than the gorgeous warehouses that are now taking their places. They are more easily warmed, and the lifts from one floor to another are so much easier. All along the Wytham are antique wooden wharves, where old-fashioned Dutch-looking vessels are moored, and some of these vessels are of great antiquity; hardly perhaps equalling the "Mayflower;" but certainly one that had traded for coals and came to we could hardly say an untimely end, was discovered by an astonished Court of Inquiry to have been built in the reign of William and Mary. Some English papers, in commenting last year upon the circumstance, said that there was not a single plank of the old vessel left, but that all had been renewed. It is perhaps more probable that many of the old planks and timbers were remaining, and the repairs occupied a comparatively small surface.

There is a peculiar feature also in Boston that reminds one of the thrifty days of our ancestors. Attached to the warehouses are some goodly dwellings where the old merchants used to live, and we can see

BOSTON HARBOUR, ON THE WYTHAM.

ST GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE
PUBLIS

WEDNESDAY MORNING IN MARKET SQUARE, BOSTON.

PETRIE, HANOVER SQUARE

through breaks in the streets great walls that surround broad gardens. There is one curious black-painted wooden warehouse that must have been there for many generations. It is built of oak, and stands across the roadway on oak columns, having a walk under. Here and there, a flight of well-worn steps conducts any traveller who may require it to the water's edge, where boatmen and fishermen do congregate, and are willing to do his bidding. The markets at Boston are held on Wednesdays, and on a much smaller scale on Saturdays, and these greatly resemble some of the fairs where wool and staples were sold, when Boston was one of the few staple towns in England. A staple town, it is hardly necessary to add, was a town chartered to carry on a business in what is called a staple article, such as wool, or lead, or tin, and it was also a place for the receipt of the king's customs; perhaps in the latter respect it might be said to resemble one of our own ports of entry, though it both exacted and was subject to greater obligations; and if we observe the various contrivances in the market-place, it is not possible to avoid the conclusion that Boston market derives some of its peculiar character from the old times of the fairs. Curious vans are pushed out into the ample market square, and canvas awnings are erected early in the

morning. Any one passing through the square on Tuesday would notice only a large irregular space, overshadowed by the vast tower of St. Botolph's Church, and surrounded by substantial old-fashioned buildings; but at an early hour on Wednesday this large space is covered over with a fungous growth, and presents no appearance of the quiet of the day before. Railways and country waggons supply a goodly assortment of merchandise, and the vans that are run out from yards and converted into shops are soon filled with goods. One particular class of van is shown in the market square here; it is on low wheels, and is drawn out by a horse from some yard on market days. Its construction may be said to resemble a large trunk with a double lid, and this lid is turned to the street. When in commission the lower half of the lid is dropped down so as to form a gangway, and the upper part is supported so as to make a kind of awning. But the goods which are offered are very various, and in a short tour round the market square I noticed laid out for sale every kind of agricultural machinery—ploughs, harrowing machines, and all the latest inventions in scythes and rakes. One enterprising Boston man had brought a small steam-engine, which he erected in a long tent, and soon had in working order. I passed later in the

day to discover what his particular line of business was, and saw a great heap of axes, hedge-clippers, and knives, and even spades and shares that had been brought (in some instances from a long distance) to be ground. There were tailors' shops, dyers, American sewing-machines, corn merchants, sentry-boxes, one or two auctioneers, probably to be on hand to dispose of unsold stock at the close of the day, and of course every possible kind of farming, or dairy, or garden produce. Next day we may search for the assembly in vain. The insubstantial pageant has faded, and the square is swept and empty.

Camden thus speaks of Boston :—"It is a considerable town, standing on both sides of the Wytham, over which is a lofty wooden bridge. Its commodious harbour occasions it to be much frequented, and it has a large market-place, and a church remarkable for its beauty and size, whose tower, running up to a great height, as it were hails travellers at a great distance."

This is but too true, or at least the residents there in Edward I.'s time had too good cause to say so. The tower of St. John's, its predecessor, hailed too many travellers to its shadow, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the fair did. For a number of knights announced that there was to be a tournament at Boston,

and promised an exceptional amount of *éclat* to the coming fair; but when the fair of staples was at its height, the chivalrous knights entered the town disguised as monks, and when fairly in, they detached themselves over the place, and set fire to various parts of it. In the hurry that ensued, they set fire to the merchants' tents and plundered their goods. It is said by some of the historians that the treasures in the tents were very great, and as the fair was advanced, much gold and silver had accumulated, which ran down in streams in Boston market square; nor is this quite improbable—a very few moidores would make a great show when set loose in such a way. The leader of this remarkable exploit, named Chamberlin, was subsequently captured and executed; but he always, to the last, refused to give the name of his accomplices. "Better times succeeding raised Botolph's town once more out of its ashes, and the staple for wool, etc., brought in great wealth, and invited the merchants of the Hanseatic League, who established here their guild or house. It is at present handsomely built and drives a considerable trade." Leland also, who lived in the reign of Henry VIII., thus speaks of the calamity that overtook Boston: "Mr. Paynel, a gentleman of Boston, tolde me, that syns that Boston of old tyme at the great

famose fair there kept was burnt, that scant syns it ever came to the old glory and riches that it had; yet sins hath it beene manyfold richer than it is now. The staple and the stiliard houses yet there remaine; but the stiliard is little or nothing occupied. There were iiii colleges of freres, merchants of the stiliard cumming by all partes by est were wont greatly to haunt Boston, and the Grey freres tooke them in a manor for founders of their house, and many Esterlinges were buried there. In the blake freres lay one of the noble Huntingfeldes, and was a late taken up hole, and a leaden bull of Innocentius, Bishop of Rochester, about his neck." He further says that "Ther remaineth at Boston a manor place of the Tilneys by their name, and one of them began the great steeple in Boston, and lies in the church by the steeple." The men of Boston of the soke belonging to the Honor of Richemunt in Holland paid £100 and two palfreys that no sheriff or his bailiffs should interfere or have anything to do with them, but they should choose a bailiff of their own from among themselves, who was to answer at the Exchequer for pleas and outgoings, as they used to answer the Earl of Bretagne while it was in his hands. They received a charter from the king; and the seal of the guild represented Bishop Blaise with a woolpack and crosier.

Leland speaks of the "faire market-place, and a crosse with a square tower," and says that at one time the church of the parish was at St. John's, and St. Botolph's was but a chapel to it. "Now, however," in his time, "the church of St. Botolph's has become the principal one," and is indeed the "fairest of all in Lincolnshire," "and served so with singing, and that of cunning men, as no parish is in all England." Richard Gough, the antiquary, who visited Boston in 1783, says that even then there was no trace of St. John's church, and the font of St. Botolph's was a new one that dated back only to 1667. He also says that the singing was "not extraordinary" at the time he was there.

We must always remember the uphill times the Boston men had in the fights with the sea in earlier days, almost resembling that of their opposite neighbours in Holland. It is often remarked that a luxuriant soil is apt to beget a negligent race of cultivators, and indeed, if we look round Europe, we must admit that there is much reason in this, even though happily the rule is not universal; but the Lincoln soil had to be reclaimed, and the tillers became all the fonder of it. In the year 1178, the old sea-bank at the mouth of the Wytham broke and flooded the Fen country;

but the sturdy inhabitants were equal to the occasion, and so soon repaired the damage that William of Malmesbury, writing twenty-three years after, says that the "country was a very paradise, and a heaven for the delight thereof." And even if we may suspect that a little surplusage could be taken off this description, from the genial weather, and the happy frame of mind William happened to be in at the time he made his report, there is yet left abundant evidence of the energy with which the men of Boston and its neighbourhood set themselves to repair the damages. Now the many generations of toil have produced a magnificent country and a fine race of men—men who are descended from those that stood so boldly forward in asserting the liberties of England. It is impossible to go into Boston market on a Wednesday morning without being struck by the size and "heft," as the word goes there, of the countrymen.

They cannot always, it is sad to admit, be acquitted of sharp trading; for the year after William of Malmesbury was round the Boston fens, a complaint reached the king that the cloth the manufacturers were turning out was not so wide as it should be according to statute—that was, two ells between the lists. "But instead of taking them in the king's name," Camden

says, "the merchants persuaded the justiciaries to leave them for a sum of money, to the damage of many." The importance of Boston as a commercial centre may be gathered from the fact that when King John (who, like the line of Stuarts, perished in a "desperate struggle against English freedom") ordered a tax on merchants, London yielded £836, Boston £780, and Southampton £712; so that Boston was in reality the second town in England in commercial importance. In the year 1206, Ralph Gernum and Robert Clark of London, were sent to the various ports of Lincolnshire, with orders to collect every vessel capable of holding eight or more horses, which were to be sent to Portsmouth, and at the same time a very wholesale order was given for "all merchants, helmsmen, and sailors, to repair to the king at Portsmouth;" and some idea of the energy of John, who has commonly been regarded as listless, may be gathered from the terms of his summons: "Any one disregarding these commands, whatever be his country, we will always hold our enemy, wherever we find him in our dominions, whether on land or water."

It would seem from the annals of Boston that the

> good old rule . . . .
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can,

was well understood in the year 1276, when an inquisition was held by twenty-four jurors of wapentake, and they found that "Robert de Tattershall claims to have at St. Botolph's on the west side of the river a tonnage of lead and wool, and a court from seventh day to seventh day—they know not by what tenure." But the king's claims seem to have been of a much more comprehensive nature, and some of them, one would think, nobody would have cared much to have deprived him of. He not only claimed the "assize of Beer and Bread," but also "the right of gallows, pillory, ducking-stool, and all waifs and strays of the sea from salting to wrangle, by what warrant they know not."

The name, "St. Botolph's town," that continually occurs, was the origin of Boston. St. Botolph was a Saxon saint who lived in the seventh century, and was almost contemporaneous with the more celebrated St. Cuthbert. The common pronunciation in the eastern counties is St. Bottle, so the transition from Bottlestown to Boston is very comprehensible. He appears to have been a favourite saint along that coast, and the priory at Colchester, of which the west front and some of the walls remain, is very interesting. It seems to have been built in part with the Roman bricks that were used at the great military station there.

Boston furnished during the reign of Edward III. a great part of the navy that conveyed his army to the battle of Cressy, a battle which taught the world that a man-at-arms was equal to a knight of the most ancient lineage, and marked the period when feudalism began to totter to its fall. And almost at the same period the great church began to raise its stately head. Its history is quite characteristic of the Lincoln men. It was not erected by any wealthy prelate or lord of the soil, but was the free work of the inhabitants of Boston. Margaret Tylney gave five pounds towards the building, and two others gave similar sums, which were the largest amounts contributed; all the rest was made up of small sums. The tower is generally called "Boston Stump," though why so graceful and tall a structure should be called so, is not at first clear; but the stem of a pollard tree would make the proportions of a high tower, and as a vessel approaches through Boston Deeps, it has in a mist or in twilight very much the appearance of a stem, called a stump there, rising high above the flat lands. It was intended, indeed, as a landmark for mariners, and in its graceful lantern a beacon-fire used to be lit at night. It is not the only church tower that was used for a beacon light; at Hadley, the iron cradle that held the fire is still

standing at its post. Boston tower is said, on the authority of a folio engraving published by Dr. Stukely in 1715, to have been begun in the year 1309, but no authority is given for this date. Some parts of the church may be nearly of that age, but the architecture of the tower is fully a century later. Of course it is supposable, when we consider how the money was raised for the church, that it may have been many years in building.

The height is given in guide-books as 300 feet; this must be taken from the water's edge, for from the churchyard to the pinnacles it is 276 feet, which is, however, prodigiously high. It is a wonderful piece of architecture as to its mechanical construction, and four circular staircases, one in each turret, lead to the lantern, from which a view of a vast landscape stretches out to the west, while the German Ocean spreads out to the east. In early times this church had the right of sanctuary, and malefactors who could reach it were for the time safe from the process of the law. Curious theories of law prevailed in those times. A Mr. Francis, with his horse, was drowned in St. Botolph's river near the church, and a fine of 11d. was levied on the horse's skin: a grim judgment that was arrived at in consequence of that being regarded in court as the most

valuable asset left. The river at Boston was at one time comparatively swift, though perhaps Leland's "runs like an arrow" is hardly accurate; at any rate boat accidents were not uncommon, and in such cases a fine was levied on the boat. Two females who fell into tubs of hot verjuice were scalded to death, and in this case the tubs were fined; and in cases of wounds from weapons, the weapons were fined. These fines of course went to the crown. Walls at one time surrounded Boston, and some traces of them are yet left: these were kept in repair by tolls on goods, and a curious record is preserved of them. A "weight," for some unexplained cause, was the Boston method of expressing 256 pounds; perhaps it was given by the porters who had to convey packages of this measure across a wharf or street; at any rate, all "weights" of cheese, fat, tallow, butter, or lead, for sale, paid $\frac{1}{4}$d.; a hundredweight was of course 112 pounds, and one of almonds, or rice, or wax, paid $\frac{1}{2}$d.; but this amount of pepper, ginger, white cinnamon, incense, quicksilver, vermilion, cinnamon, and what would now be termed heavy groceries, paid $\frac{1}{4}$d.; and so the lists run on, including everything that can have been in general use, even to fox-skins and stock-fish. It may be interesting to remark here that the many curious weights and

measures that had prevailed in England saw their end on January 1, 1879, and since that, the wonderful tables that have puzzled not only Americans but Englishmen, have been merging into the imperial standard. This was soon done in America, when the colonists went over; but it is a little singular that, though these measures have passed away, many of the old words obsolete in England have found a home in America, and can only be discovered here in provincial vocabularies. One of these I happened to meet with in a fine old hostelry at Boston, and asked a friend who had spent some years in America if he ever heard the expression "game leg," as applied to a damaged limb, or of any one who had changed his residence as "flitting," or a turkey-cock called a "gobbler," or any one being required to "foot" a bill; all of which he said he had often heard, but never out of America, and I astonished him by pointing out every word in a book of old Lincolnshire dialect; and the list might have been extended indefinitely; for even what is often regarded as a pure American expression, "I guess," is really very old English. Chaucer says—

> Her yellow hair was braided in a tress,
> Behind her back, a yard long, I guess;

and Locke says, "He whose design it is to excel in

English poetry would not, I guess, think that the way of it was to make his first essay in Latin verse." Locke may, it is possible, have introduced it into Carolina. But it probably is only a variation of the old English

ANCIENT GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE: FOUNDED A.D. 1567.

word "wis" to know anything, and that is almost the exact sense in which it is commonly used in the States. Many an "Americanism" has been used in Boston grammar-school, before the great exodus to Massa-

chusetts. The drawing of Boston School here given is taken just as the precincts are entered from the road. There is a large imposing master's house probably not more than a century old, and at its side is a very noble wrought-iron gateway of greater age; a liberal playground leads up to the school, which was built in the year 1567, and endowed. The master's fees have been varied from time to time, both in the amount and in the manner of collection, and now they are fixed at £200 with a residence. Under him was an usher, who is now styled the second master, and who is paid by rents arising from property. This building consists of a centre rather nicely broken by a bow window, and two wings. From the style one might have considered it to be later, but from James I. to Charles II. there is in such buildings a great general similarity. At the back of the school, enveloped in trees, is a fine old brick tower, once attached to a mansion-house that has disappeared. This is built of brick like Tattershall Castle, which was at one time the residence of the family who seem to have levied tolls on Boston, though the wapentake jury, as we have seen, sadly declared that they did not know by what warrant. To make a slight digression here, it may be remarked that these tolls have in some instances survived up to the present time; as,

for example, a very wealthy English nobleman now living erects a barricade at the entrance to an old market and levies 2d. on every four-footed animal that comes there to be sold; if the custom has been abolished, it is only very recently, for I heard complaints of it the last time I was at the town in question.

The brick tower just referred to is called Hussey Tower, and it stands to the north of St. John's churchyard, which has before been mentioned; an ancient wall that runs along the roadway encloses it. The estate of Lord Hussey was granted to the corporation of Boston, and they sold and took away much of a venerable old mansion called Hussey Hall, but a great pile of gabled buildings was removed in 1780, and various articles both before and since were carted away. An old engraving still remains that shows it to have been a very noble residence, and its removal was little less than a national loss. It might have been so readily converted, had it remained, into some fine institution, or even public offices—like Aston Hall near Birmingham, or Bank Hall near Warrington — but unhappily the powers decreed otherwise, and the materials were taken away and sold. One thing is clear, that it must have required some time and labour to demolish it. The brickwork all round Boston is

excellent; the old builders seem to have taken their models generally from the Low Countries on the other side of the German Ocean, though, singularly enough, they used the style of "setting" which is called "English" very generally, in preference to "Dutch bond;" and this is believed to be so much better constructively, that it is in the present day commonly employed. The walls of Tattershall Castle and other old buildings in Lincolnshire are so perfectly even, that any builder would stand high in his craft who was able to put up such work.

The grammar-school itself that has caused this digression has the following inscription over the door: —"Reginæ Elisabethæ nono. Maior et Burgenses Bostoniæ uno et eodem consensu puerorum institutionis gratiâ in piis litteris hanc ædificerunt scholam Gulielmo Ganocke stapulæ mercatore et tunc maiore existenti." At one time the fairs alluded to in another place were held in the school enclosure, and even so lately as the last century it was called the mart yard. It was enacted, however, that no soldiers should drill in the mart yard, for fear of distracting the attention of the scholars unduly. But the present market square has for generations been also a mart. Old Boston school has been the original "alma mater" where many a

resident of New Boston might trace the names of his forefathers. Boston records are, as a general rule, freely open, and especially to what Old Boston calls its offspring; and it is not very uncommon for farmers who come to market to speak of their namesakes across the deep, and dilate on the prosperity of their tenth cousins; for it must be remembered that many of the early settlers in Massachusetts before Cotton's time were men either from Boston or the neighbourhood; and it has been remarked that they differed in most particulars from the earlier settlers in Maryland or Virginia; these had often either run through a patrimony, or were younger brothers of noble families with no prospects at home, that contrived to get a large grant of land where tobacco and cotton might be grown. The Massachusetts settlers were men of the middle and upper classes in England, and as such may be said to have differed even from the artisans who ventured across the Atlantic in the "Mayflower." They wished only for substantial men in their number; they were not driven from their fatherland by earthly want or adventure, or in hopes of finding the gold mines that Cabot had falsely said abounded in the New World. They were men who could not conform to the practices of English sacerdotalism, and tore themselves away with

many a pang from their fatherland. "Our hearts," Winthrop's followers wrote to some of the brethren they left behind, "shall be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness." John Cotton,[1] the vicar of Boston, who resigned his benefice to join the new settlers, was a man of scholarship and high standing, and only left his vicarage because he would not conform to the genuflections and bowings that were ordained to be used in the Church of England; his life was, it is true, without reproach, but he could not conform to what he believed to be superstition, and he appealed in vain to the Bishop of Lincoln and the Earl of Dorset to save him from the impending persecution, urging that for twenty years his sole aim had been to advance righteousness and godliness, and saying, with perfect truth, that his way of life was before all men, and none could challenge it. He indeed might have gone far beyond the patriarch in asking whose ox or whose ass he had taken, for he gave to the extent of his power, and left himself often very bare. All this Lord Dorset

[1] In an interesting article in the "Standard," which mentions Boston celebrating its 250th anniversary, it is stated that Cotton was not the first minister who came to New Boston, but a somewhat crusty old divine, the Rev. Mr. Blaxton, had preceded him. He was, however, bought out by Winthrop, and settled in parts unknown with some few of his followers.

knew quite well, and his reply showed that at any rate he was not a hypocrite, for he told him that "if his crime had been merely drunkenness, or uncleanness, or any such lesser fault," there would have been no difficulty at all in procuring his pardon, but as for Puritanism or nonconformity, these were too heinous, and he had better fly. But the Stuarts had run thirty years of their astonishing career before Cotton left Boston for America, and Eliot and Cromwell all in vain had stood between them and their doom. Distance has hardly softened down those dreary days, though we can turn always with delight to the heroic souls that might hardly have been heard of in prosperity, but, like Boston beacon, shone all the brighter on the darkest night.

The Puritans, it is unnecessary to say, only wished to worship in their own way, or else, if that were forbidden, to leave England for freer skies. But the genius of Laud stopped the latter resource, and filled the English gaols with those who were only there for conscience' sake. Still, to prevent vast numbers leaving the shores for America was beyond even his power, and indeed the dissolution of the Parliament in 1629 was accompanied by some of the most dramatic scenes in English history. The King had decided to rule without a Parliament, and the doctrine of passive

obedience was preached from almost all episcopal pulpits. Eliot, who was a great landed proprietor, was far from being a fanatic, but he caught the spirit of the times, and wrote from his country mansion, "Nothing but Heaven shrouds us from despair;" and when he went up to the House of Commons afterwards—the last that sat before it was dissolved for eleven years—he broke out in impassioned eloquence: "The Gospel is that truth in which this kingdom hath been happy through a long prosperity. This ground therefore let us lay for a foundation of our building, that that truth, not with words but with actions, we will maintain. There is a ceremony used in the Eastern churches, of standing at the repetition of the creed, to testify their purpose to maintain it, not only with their bodies upright but their swords drawn. Give me leave to call that custom very commendable." Now, however, all was in confusion; Charles was in the Lords' Chamber, and had summoned the Commons into his presence. The framers of the taxes who had appeared to answer their illegal levies before the Commons, pleaded the king's commands for silence, and the Speaker intimated that he had a royal order to adjourn. Through all this confusion, however, Eliot was still on the floor of the House. The doors were locked against the king's messengers; the Speaker,

with a sturdy sense of legality, was held down in the chair; and Charles could have heard his own knell in the ringing cheers that greeted Eliot's closing words, "None have ever gone about to break parliaments but in the end parliaments have broken them." It would be about five years after this memorable scene that John Cotton decided to give up his vicarage at Boston, and fly to New England. Cotton belonged to an old and honourable English family. One branch has for many generations been settled at Combermere Abbey in Cheshire, a venerable mansion in a very beautiful park, that once belonged to the Cistercian monks, and skirts one of the meres or small lakes which are a feature in Cheshire. This branch of the family is now represented by Lord Combermere. To another branch belonged Charles Cotton, whose name will always be held dear as the associate of good old Isaac Walton. Walton, by the way, curiously appears as an admirer of Sheldon the Archbishop of Canterbury, who in his palace at Lambeth listened with amusement to the mock sermon of a cavalier, who had returned from Boston and Essex, and held up the nasal twang and Puritan idioms to derision; yet Sheldon was by no means the worst of his day, or good old Isaac Walton would not have spoken so kindly of him as he did, even though it must

be admitted that he warmed over him as a fisher, not of men, but of "the barbel or umber." Cotton was born at the town of Derby on December 4, 1585. His father was Rowland Cotton, a lawyer, and it was at

COTTON MEMORIAL, RESTORED AT THE COST OF RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

first intended that he should follow the profession of his father, in order to enable him to recover some estates that had left the family, as was supposed, unjustly; but fortunately his lot was otherwise cast,

and he went, after having passed a creditable career at Derby School, to Trinity College, Cambridge, where at the age of twenty-one he became a Master of Arts. He married Elizabeth Horrocks, the sister of James Horrocks, a celebrated minister of Lancashire; and the family of Horrocks is as well known by Australian and American "dry-goods" merchants of the present day as is Witney in Oxfordshire, a town that at one time excelled all others in the manufacture of blankets, and can boast of a noble church with one of the richest livings in England. Of this church, as it happens, a grandson of Cotton's born in America became rector, having accompanied his father to England in the year 1688. In his day Witney was in its glory, and twenty shuttles were busy where now we only have one. Among Cotton's descendants are the families of Cushing, Everett, Frothingham, Grant, Hale, Jackson, Lee, Mather, Storer, Thayer, Tofts, Tracy, Upham, Walter, Whiting, and many other well-known names. The chapel shown on the previous page lies on the south-west angle of St. Botolph's Church, and was restored to Cotton's memory by the residents of the United States, at a cost of £700 sterling. An inscription in Latin by the Hon. Edward Everett of Boston, Massachusetts records the circumstance.

In perpetuam Johannis Cottoni memoriam
Hujus ecclesiæ multos per annos
Regulantibus Jacobo et Carolo, Vicarii
Gravis, diserti, docti, laboriosi.
Dein propter res sacras in patria misere turbatas
Novis sedibus in novo orbe quæsitis.
Ecclesiæ primariæ, Bostoniæ, Nov-Anglorum
Nomen hoc venerabile.
In Cottoni honorem deducentis
Usque ad finem vitæ summâ laude
Summâque in rebus tam humanis quam divinis auctoritate
Pastoris et Doctoris,
Annis CCXXV, post migrationem ejus peractis
Prognati ejus civesque Bostonienses Americani
A fratribus Anglicis ad hoc pium munus provocati
Ne viri eximii nomen
Utriusque orbis desiderii et decoris
Diutius a templo nobili exularet
In quo per tot annos oracula divina
Diligenter docte sancteque enuntiavisset
Hoc sacellum restaurandum, et hanc tabulam ponendam
Anno salutis recuperatæ
Libenter grate curaverunt.

Cotton was not the only English clergyman who left at that time to found a new church. Hooker went from Hartford to found the church of Hartford, giving the name to the city, as Cotton's friends had done for Boston. For many years Cotton continued his labours in his new country, and could he only now see the result of his pilgrimage, he might say, "With my staff

I crossed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

But darker times were still before the Puritans, and however disastrous these might be to England's welfare, they were of great benefit to the Western Hemisphere. It is true that Cromwell appeared on the scene, and during his short reign peace and justice were restored; but his mighty soul had hardly passed away, before the third of the Stuarts appeared on the scene, and sauntered into the palaces of his ancestors as if he had only returned from the "grand tour," and as if the solemn protest of Cromwell's whole reign and the terrible tragedy of Whitehall had no concern for him. He devoted the whole of his not inconsiderable abilities to cultivate all that was frivolous and nearly all that was vicious in life, and to mock, and teach others to mock, at whatever was earnest; but the ill-starred house was permitted to descend to even a lower depth still before the longsuffering of England was filled up to the measure, and the Stuarts banished. James II. came to the throne, and from the first outstripped even his brother in wickedness. Perhaps, indeed, he was the worst monarch that ever sat on an English throne. Those who would have gone over the ocean quietly to New England were imprisoned, and except

in the actual bloodshed, England resembled Spain at the time of the Spanish Inquisition. Bunyan was imprisoned in Bedford Gaol in Charles II.'s time, with many other good men who had not succeeded in crossing the ocean, and his mental sufferings were touchingly told. The parting from his wife, he says in his own pathetic language, was "like the pulling off the flesh from the bones, and that not because I am somewhat too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should often have it brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them." He is especially anxious about his "poor blind child." He says, knowing too well the hard times that Puritans were suffering: "Poor child, what sorrow art thou to have for thy portion in this world! thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer cold, hunger, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee." Whether the strictly Saxon spirit of independence—the spirit that enabled the inhabitants to hold out so long against the Normans—lingered longest in the lands round the fens, it may not be easy to say; but this part of England was the stronghold of the Puritans,—and there is hardly a town that has not several namesakes in New England.

CHAPTER XII.

HAWARDEN, HOLYWELL, YORK, AND CHIDDINGSTONE.

Hawarden—Hawarden Castle, the seat of the Gladstones—Serjeant Glynne—Hawarden Rectory—Ewloe Castle—Flint, Holywell, and St. Winefred's Well—Conway—Old streets in country towns generally in England and on the Continent—What constitutes picturesqueness—Some streets in York—Chiddingstone—English taste for beauty not extinct, only misdirected.

THERE are many small country towns that can hardly be regarded as above the rank of villages, and yet they are full of interest, and abound with historical associations. Among these, certainly, we may place Hawarden (pronounced Harden), which is celebrated not only as the residence of Mr. W. E. Gladstone, but for its charming surroundings. It lies on the roads between Chester, Hawarden, and Mold, and is not nearly so much visited as it would be if its beauties were more fully known. The highway which skirts the left bank of the river Dee overlooks the beautiful fields of Wirral, and the estu-

aries of the Mersey and the Dee are plainly visible If we stop at what is called Queen's Ferry or King's Ferry, according to the reigning monarch, and take a straight road on the left-hand side, we arrive, in half an hour's walk, at the beautiful village or country town of Hawarden. The gates of Hawarden Castle are actually on the main street, and the village runs along the side of the park walls for fully half a mile. It is not at all unlike an old-fashioned French town, such as we see if we leave the banks of the Loire or the Meuse, and wander for a mile or two in the country. There is a curious circumstance connected with Hawarden Castle that is not commonly known, and which singularly connects the Gladstone family, who now own it, with the Crown. William I. included it in a grant to his nephew, Hugh Lupus,

OLD PORCH AT HAWARDEN VILLAGE.

and it was held by his successors under the name of Earl of Chester, and afterwards subordinately by the barons of Montalt, until it was resumed by the Crown, along with the title of Earl of Chester.

HAWARDEN VILLAGE.

Henry VI. granted it to Sir Thomas Stanley, and the house of Stanley held it until it was forfeited again to the Crown, when James, Earl of Derby, was taken after the battle of Worcester and beheaded at Bolton. Cromwell sold it for some nominal sum to Serjeant

Glynne, and it remained in his family till the sudden death of Sir Stephen Glynne in London, when it passed to his sister, Mrs. W. E. Gladstone. There are the remains of the original castle in the beautiful park. By the removal of vast heaps of rubbish, the previous form of the structure, which was pentagonal, has been discovered. At one angle was the keep—a lofty circular tower—which is still nearly entire ; and from its summit are splendid views of the surrounding country, and the Vale Royal of Cheshire. Hawarden rectory is one of the richest in England, being estimated at more than £4000 a year, and has always been an appanage of Hawarden Castle. The church is not very large, but it is irregular and picturesque, and from the churchyard may be seen one of the most beautiful views in England. The estuary of the Dee is like a lake when the tide is high, and almost every acre in the great district of Wirral—which is the name given to the isthmus of Cheshire that is bounded by the estuaries of the Mersey and the Dee—is stretched out before our view. The architectural feature which figures at the beginning of this chapter is very curious, and almost unique in England. The house, as it were, strides past its neighbours, and forms a porch in its stride. There is a comfortable shelter below, and the space above is utilised for a room.

The country town of Hawarden is very pleasing, and, like other places where there is a great house, there are many excellent dwellings on the outskirts at each end. The road that runs through it is very wide and commodious, and there are one or two quaint signs hanging out, and supported by wrought iron of excellent design and work. It has seen some troublous times in days of old. The advanced guard of the sagacious Henry II. marched through it, commanded by the king himself, to encounter David and Conan, the heroic sons of Owen Gwynedd, and the encounter took place very near here. About two miles from Hawarden is a thickly-wooded dell, which a traveller might easily pass by without remarking; indeed, it is not very readily found, even if we are in quest of it. In this dell is a very interesting ruin, thickly mantled with ivy, which bears the name of Ewloe Castle. Hardly anything is known of its history, or even with certainty who its founder was; but it probably was a rendezvous for the forces of the Welsh patriots. They drew the English army, which was under the personal command of Henry Plantagenet, the conqueror of Ireland, into a defile which is a continuation of the dell where Ewloe Castle stands, and routed it with dreadful slaughter. The little stream that flows past this ancient castle is called

Wepre brook, and it runs through the wood called Coed Ewloe. Flint Castle was a near point for supports, and doubtless was in commission. I could hardly recommend any stranger to these regions to make a visit to Flint. It lies in a country of unsurpassed beauty ; but for some reason or other, though its surroundings have always been prosperous, the county town is squalid ; and though the castle abounds with interest, it is so indifferently kept that I could not find any scene in the ancient place I should wish to be responsible for recommending a tourist to make a pilgrimage to examine. There is one old town here, Holywell, that no one who is in the vicinity should neglect to visit. There are several picturesque views in it, though mills have rather modernised some parts of it ; but the chief interest centres in the beautiful chapel that has been built over the well. The well stands in a great groined canopy, with finely-moulded ribs and excellently well carved bosses, and over it is the chapel. The mouldings in the windows of the chapel, and the small shafts, are of exquisite design. The well is fed by a cool spring of singular brightness, and is twelve feet long, seven feet wide, and five feet deep. The cool crystal water never alters in temperature, either in summer or winter ; and it is so clear that the smallest

objects are as visible at the bottom as if no water intervened. The copious supply is not affected by the heaviest rains or the longest droughts, and it is estimated by Pennant that twenty-four tons per minute are continually flowing. In case this does not convey at first an adequate idea of the immense volume that runs to waste, it may be said that it would supply two towns of half a million inhabitants each with twenty gallons of water daily for every inhabitant. Of course, the well can boast of a miraculous origin among the simple inhabitants :—

About the beginning of the seventh century, Prince Caradoc was greatly smitten with the attractions of Winefred, who was a devout young lady of high respectability, but who refused—rightly, as events proved —to return his attentions. She fled away on account of his power, and he followed her from hamlet to hamlet until he fell in with her at Holywell, and then he renewed his unsuccessful proposals ; and, on receiving another refusal, he drew his sword and struck off her beautiful head, which rolled down the hill and stopped at the present well : water at once gushed out, and its properties were miraculous. Winefred was related to the family of St. Beuno, and he at once entered an appearance, and simply annihilated Caradoc, who was

never beheld again ; and then, reverently taking up the head, he carried it to the body and joined it on again so deftly, that only a thin white slender line was left to show the work of her impetuous admirer.

A singular custom prevails at Holywell. Owing to the situation of the church, the bell is almost inaudible in some parts of the town, and a man is employed to go through the streets every Sunday with a large bell suspended by a strap from his shoulders, and a cushion buckled round one knee ; as he walks, his knee strikes the bell, and so he is converted into a sort of walking belfry. The spring at St. Winefred's is naturally endowed with miraculous qualities : the moss that grows near it is fragrant, and the stones to the present day are stained with blood. All this the inhabitants are quite ready to show a stranger, though he will hardly agree with them as to the cause. In the fragrant moss he will recognise the *Jungermannia asplenoides*, and in the bloodstain on the pebbles he is disillusioned by finding another production of the vegetable kingdom—the *Lepraria iolithus*. The chapel and the groined roof over the well are said to have been built by the Countess of Richmond, the mother of Henry VII. Mr. Grose considers the style to have been earlier, but it would be easy to find many buildings in England that corre-

spond in style with this, and are known to have been built at about the same period as tradition assigned to St. Winefred's. The fortified Welsh towns, such as Conway or Caernarvon, are quite peculiar; and the castles differ in every respect from those we see on the Rhine or Moselle. They are vast royal fortresses, with little towns clustering round their massive walls, and often contain groups of architecture of great beauty. I cannot agree with the description of Conway that Pennant gives, when he says: "A more ragged town I hardly ever saw from within, nor a more beautiful one from without." There are some very singular old houses; and one especially, called the "Plas Mawr," is a grand old specimen of Elizabethan architecture. Nobody can fail to be struck with the picturesque view of the castle from the corner of High Street and Castle Street, and the fine line of old houses that run up to it, and seem to combine so well with the architecture of the overshadowing fortress.

In taking leave of our old country towns, it may not be quite out of place to say a few words regarding the term "picturesque"—and a few examples will be introduced from different parts with a view to elucidating this somewhat obscure adjective.

There would be no hesitation with any one in calling

the old Castle Inn at Cambridge, for example, a picturesque example of a front, though the reason for its being so might not at first be quite obvious.

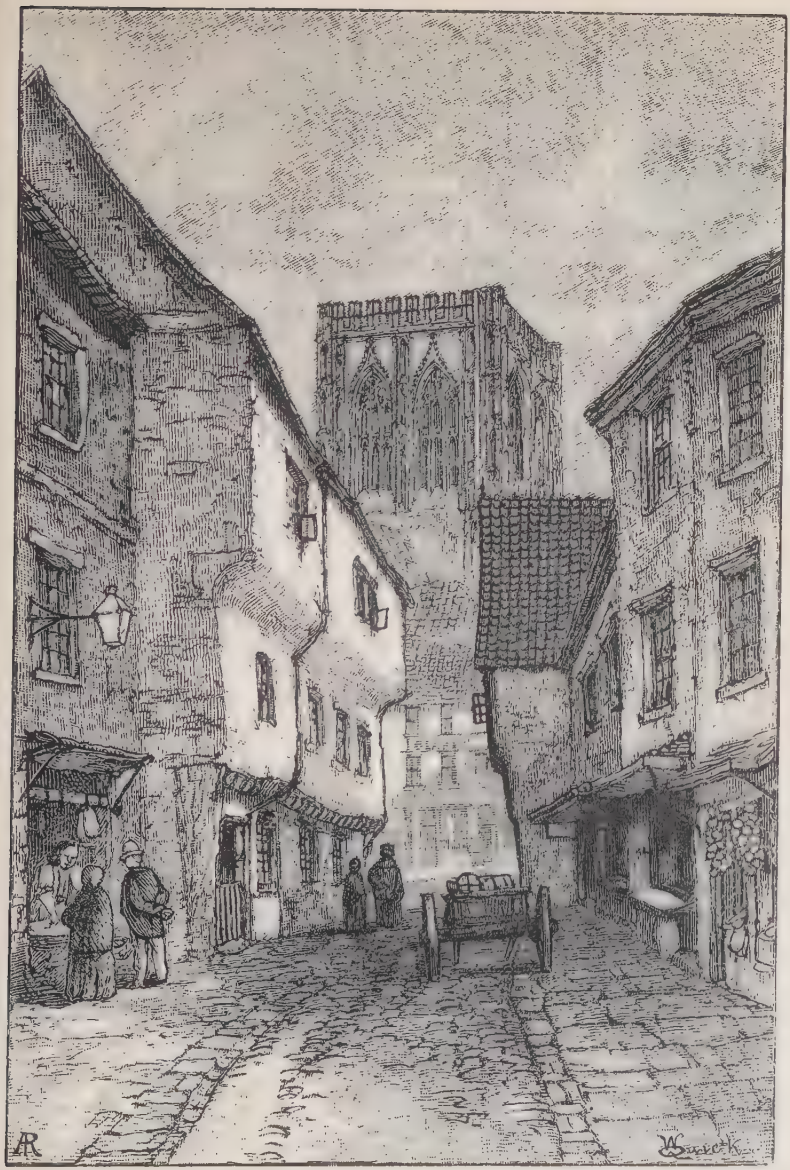
The singular quality of picturesqueness is that it

CASTLE INN, CAMBRIDGE.

can be found in all sorts of buildings, erected for every possible purpose, and in narrow city lanes, and broad streets of country towns. It seems to be easily attained, and quite as easily lost; and it is of such value in our eyes, that it endears a home to us, and even raises a house in its market value.

It will be noticed that the designers of old allowed more space to the streets of a country town than to a walled city. The land which was enclosed was more secure and valuable; and consequently it was more closely packed with houses. In some streets the houses approach so closely that an ordinary man can almost touch each dwelling, as at Shrewsbury and Newark; and in some parts of Chester there are singularly narrow streets. The Shambles at York are a very good example of an ancient street that has undergone little alteration; and the great central tower of the Cathedral, rising in a vast pale gray at the farthest end, has a very noble appearance. The house on the left, with projecting stories, is of high antiquity. Stories were built to project, in order to make more of the land on which the houses were crowded together.

In Frankfort, and in some of the Continental towns, the dwellings run up to a great height, and are richly carved on the front with armorial bearings and historical scenes. They resemble the old houses that we occasionally meet with on the north side of St. Paul's, but that the latter want the rich carvings which we find so profusely on the Continent. They are, however, in many instances exceedingly picturesque, and, as before said, the word picturesque is of so undefined a character,



CENTRAL TOWER OF YORK MINSTER, FROM OLD SHAMBLES.

ST GEORGE HANOVER SQUARE
PUBLIC LIB

that it would be well to consider its meaning. Every one, as Mr. Petit has observed, has some notion of what he means by it himself, if even his own ideas may differ in some respect from those of his neighbours. What may be called "restoring" architects have no idea, as a rule, of what the word means; they see what they call the excrescences of ages on a building of the twelfth or thirteenth century, and they strike away the additions of the Tudor period and the Stuart, which are so dear to an artist, and add new work to correspond with the old. The old is then scraped to correspond with the new, and the result is a building that looks as if it had only been finished within the current year. This is, unhappily for the lovers of the picturesque, the crowning triumph of a church restorer. Bidston Church, for example, in Cheshire, was generally regarded as among the most picturesque little relics in all England; but some years ago it was considered to stand in need of repairs, which could have been easily made, and the venerable quaint structure, in the middle of a singularly old village, preserved; but it was decided to demolish it, and build a totally new one on a new pattern; this is the work that is most congenial to a "restorer." It is not said in blame to any one; but as a matter of fact, the eye for the picturesque with all

concerned was, in this case, entirely wanting. In a similar spirit, the remark was recently made to me, from a quarter where I should hardly have expected it, that Chester stood in need of remodelling. I was walking with a friend on the ancient walls that environ the city, and we were noticing how pleasantly it rose from the Dee, when my companion remarked that it was a shame to see such a sight so spoiled; and said that if the old streets were pulled down, and new broad ones built, running down towards the river with cross ones at right angles, then a really fine city might stand in its place.

Plate-glass and patent brick were his notion of delight, and had for him more attractions than the projecting gables and the quaint rows and casemented mullion windows of our forefathers; and yet this was not on the score of utility, because I easily explained to him that, for convenience, the city as it stood was much more suitable for the wants of a country town; but an even row of new shops was, to his eye, as superior in comeliness, according to his words, as a new coat is to a threadbare tattered suit. Again, I knew an architect who had always practised in the Scottish-Greek style of Edinburgh; and though his experience in that was very great indeed, he was at a loss when

required to build a Gothic church. He believed that irregularity and confusion were necessary for picturesqueness, and accordingly, when required to design one, he put buttresses at irregular distances, and windows with square heads, and pointed heads, and all sorts of widths, ranged side by side—and the result was a grotesque failure. The very essence of beauty and picturesqueness is harmony. "An old building," says Mr. Petit, "is not necessarily picturesque, but it is more likely to be so than a new one; first, because it is a work of art that has long been left in the hands of nature, whose marks are impressed upon it in various tints which art could not imitate, and in changes of surface and texture that denote the lapse of time; and next, because it brings together the present and the past; for even if there is no modern work at hand to remind us that it belongs to an age different from our own, still we feel that it does so, and the appreciation of picturesqueness as well as of beauty is an operation of the mind as well as of the bodily sense. Still the presence of objects more nearly approaching our own period adds much to picturesqueness;" and Mr. Petit adds with great truth, that the figures in a picture of an old building should never be made to imitate the costume of the period that it was built in, if picturesqueness be

the object sought after. As an illustration of this, I may instance that I have just returned from a visit to some farm buildings in Cheshire, which once formed part of an Abbey. The refectory was filled with hay and straw, and waggons lay in front of an Abbot's private chapel—windowless, it is true, though the door and roof were perfect. A few labourers in the costume of the nineteenth century, with hay-forks over their shoulders, had just come in from the fields, and were going into the remains that had been converted into a dwelling.

Now let any one picture this to himself, adapting it to any abbey he may have in his mind, and then suppose the building painted in its original form, and peopled with Benedictine monks. How infinitely the present state of the abbey surpasses, for the purposes of an artist, the old one! There is nothing, of course, incongruous in it, for that would be fatal to picturesqueness, which demands harmony.

Nothing can be in worse taste than a row of Gothic windows, even if they are the same in outline, with different tracery in their designs. Merton College chapel at Oxford would not be so bad if the best of the windows (and they are fairly good) were the type of all; but as it is, the effect of the building—which,

however, has other sins to answer for—is most unpleasing. In a word, picturesqueness consists in uniformity and variety mingled together. We see it to perfection in many Continental towns that have not been much altered; and if we tried to get at the secrets of the designers of the buildings, I believe it would be found to consist in this: Each builder has had his own scheme, and fitted his work as well as he could to his neighbour's work; a harmony was thus kept throughout; nobody gave up his own individual requirements to make a window correspond with one in the next house, but he seemed to have a desire to be as neighbourly as possible in his design. Hence arose that pleasing mingling of uniformity and variety which has been insisted on as the soul of picturesqueness. Often the photograph of a landscape is so exactly suited to these conditions, that one may almost say that no change could be suggested for the better. The picture is in itself complete. If, however, a cottage or a row of cottages is introduced, it is wonderful how easily the landscape is marred; nor does it require much skill to destroy all the prospect; an ordinary builder or village wheelwright is generally quite equal to the occasion. The new edifice approaches the limit of the road allowed by the turnpike trust, and at once, as if by

glamour, the ancient church, with its lych-gate and yews, disappears, and can only be seen after the new brick building is passed by. The beautiful group we remember of old is no more, and if, as is probable, the new shop and cottages induce a little rivalry, we must be content to let it live only in our recollections. Now, I do believe that this very greatly accounts for the ugliness of modern designing as compared with old. There would not have been such a desire to consider one's self only, and let all the rest of the world be of no account in your eyes. Probably, any one designing new premises under some such conditions as I have indicated would have remembered that he had such things to respect as a neighbour, and hardly have been so ready to remove his landmarks. It by no means follows, however, that because buildings multiply, there must of some necessity be a crowding up; and an almost random instance is given on the next page of a city scene from York.

Here the "White Swan" and the "York Herald" divide the pavement in the middle of an irregular row of houses, the view of which is cut off by St. Sampson's church. The spire rises in the distance with sufficient force to form an incisive object, and the group, simple as it is, is very pleasant. In the street

SAMPSON SQUARE, YORK.

HANOVER SQUARE

shown here are the remains of the Parliament-house—for Parliaments were held at York as far back as the reign of Henry II. The quaint coaching-house that is traditionally connected with the Parliaments, of course is a building of less antiquity than the reign of Henry II., though probably it has seen at least four hundred summers. Of York, however, we have little now to say, except what pertains simply to the question in hand, the elements of picturesqueness in a city or town. Though so many buildings are shown in so small a space, the actual breadth is never lost. There are two churches, a newspaper office, and an inn, that all seem in some way to have found a *modus vivendi* without obscuring each other unduly. Indeed, we cannot do better than perambulate the streets of York in this locality, and notice how the scenes change at every step; whether the streets are narrow or broad, there is some new vista to delight the eye. Sometimes a cathedral tower disappears and another opens out in its place with some new combination, and sometimes for a little all disappear, and the ancient houses rise in perspective above the pinnacles of the Minster.

When these scenes were laid out, there was probably no studied design to attain them, but it would seem almost as if beauty had been inseparable from men's

daily work. If a piece of furniture or household utensil was required, it was sure to be comely and quaint. We can no more design in their style now, than we can write a ballad that could be passed off for an ancient one. Many have been the attempts to do the latter, and some of them have had a fair measure of success, but just at last some fatal flaw appears, and we discover the new wine in old bottles. The iron-work for supporting a village sign, that was probably designed and wrought by a village blacksmith, would put a man in a similar position to shame now, and perhaps a man in a much higher position too.

I cannot close the present series better than by introducing a row of cottages from Chiddingstone, near Penshurst: a name that is sufficient to fill any one's recollections with associations of beauty. The country round there is one rich storehouse of ancient domestic architecture. Knowle, Hever, Ightham, are household words to every student of old English architecture, and there are lesser examples like Chiddingstone in all directions. Nothing can exceed the quiet simple beauty of the row of houses shown here, and I often think it would be interesting to hear the remarks of the man who designed it, if he could have seen a modern brick row both internally

and externally. He might perhaps have justly said that for convenience a modern kitchen range is superior to the old contrivances for cooking, and a brass tap

CHIDDINGSTONE.

he would justly consider an advance upon a well or a pump, but he would hardly think that a round brass knob was an improvement upon a bell-pull, like the one from Guildford given on the next page, which is

finely modelled out of wrought iron; the row, also, of sculleries, with a bed-room over, that are tacked on to each house, and the yard walls, all at right angles stopped by a cross one, would fail to excite his admiration. As for the square lifeless rooms, with a sixpenny wall-paper and small painted chimneypiece, he would at once put these down as cells for refractory churchmen. The rows of dismal windows, each one a copy of its square neighbour, and fitted with that worst of all contrivances, a sash window, he would regard with the same feelings as we now should a hatter's stock-in-trade where each article was of the same size and the same pattern. In the beautiful row shown on the preceding page the windows are of such levels and shapes as the necessities of the apartment require, and one pleasing varied effect is the result. The worst—or the best—feature in the case is, that the cost of a well-designed row would not exceed that of the bald dreary ones we see on the outskirts of any of our growing towns: supposing

BELL-PULL, GUILDFORD.

always—which is supposing, perhaps, rather too much —that the workmanship is substantial.

The most remarkable and inexplicable feature of the case is this, that at no time in our history have people been so alive to the charms of beauty and art. If a site for a building is beautiful, it is at once at a high premium; and the greatest recommendation for a watering-place is, that in the neighbourhood is some charming scenery. Again, there are in London every year the very finest collections of paintings that have ever been gathered together; and we are compelled to admit that, judged solely by their merits, the greatest artists of whom we have any knowledge have lived, and do live, in the present century. Another anomaly is that people are so willing to contribute sums of money for architectural purposes which they disapprove of, but they are told it is correct; and this shows that, rightly directed, the ancient spirit that produced the buildings we delight in is not extinct. A vicar who has read the most elementary work on Gothic architecture can raise from any congregation a contribution which, as compared with their wealth, is enormously large, to make an ancient parish church look like an old friend with a new face. A new surface is given to it; lichens and weather-stains are

removed; a boss or a well-remembered capital that is worn by time is broken up, and a new one is let in. Now, the hopeful feature in this is, that it shows a strong yearning after the picturesque. The parishioners feel a sad want, it is true, when their beloved building has departed for ever; only, they have been told to do it—they have little known that they were told by blind guides, and have found but wells without water. Still, the desire for beauty is evident enough in their misguided generosity, and affords a sufficient hope that in the fulness of time our villages and country towns will preserve religiously something of their ancient beauty.

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Printed by R. & R. Clark, *Edinburgh.*

FIG. 2/11

KW-432-888